

***Joint Second Cycle Degree in International Relations:
Europe in the Visegrad Perspective***

On-line Reader

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Introduction

This reader is dedicated to familiarise scholars of international relations with plethora of approaches recently developed in the area of European integration and Central European cooperation. More specifically the subject area covered in this compendium of papers includes: current developments in international public and private law as well as EU law with emphasis given on their application in the Visegrad countries legal systems, international economic relations, international security, EU on international arena, current developments in political systems of V4 countries, Visegrad region as cultural and social area. Scholars have an opportunity to learn about institutions and challenges to international security after 9/11, Europe as normative power in international relations, EU Eastern enlargement and transformations of collective identities in Visegrad countries, challenges to democracy, citizenship and civil society in the Visegrad countries.

Gilles Rouet, in the opening chapter of this reader, tackles the question of constructing the very idea of common Europe, borders of common European identity and crisis of social legitimacy of European integration. In the second chapter, I examine major concepts of Europe as normative power in international relations. This theoretical debate finds its empirical reflection in analysis of the EU policy toward recent Ukrainian crisis. In the third chapter Marcin Rebes deals with totality thoughts and fear of totalitarianism in the past and contemporary international relations on truth and responsibility from the perspective of an attitude towards the other as reflected in writings of Jakob Leib Talmon and Emmanuel Levinas. In the fourth chapter Marcin Grabowski is analysing a non-european form of economic integration as exemplified in regional integration in the Asia-Pacific with major question addressed being: is there anything left from Asia-Pacific Community Proposal? Monika Eriksen, in the fifth chapter, examines essence and substance of the concept of the Visegrad Battlegroup in light of current developments within the EU's Common Security and Defence Policy. Ewa Kamarad examines harmonisation of conflict of legal regulations in the EU and its implications on private international law in the Visegrad countries. Kinga Gajda focuses in her paper on differences between Visegrad group countries' culture based on cultural dimensions presented by Geert Hofstede, Shalom H. Schwartz, Roland Inglehart and Wayne E. Baker with the aim to present Visegrad countries as different cultures in spite of their common communistic history and membership in the Eastern-Central Europe. Krzysztof Koźbiał investigates current developments in the Czech party system.

Viktor Glied explains phenomenon of social movements becoming political parties based on the case of green party in Hungary. Zoltan Bretter explains the present state of democratic system in Hungary using the metaphor of half way process. Halfway in this sennse means existence of incomplete learning process of a democratic political culture that already owes a lot to its established traditions: the state-centrism, paternalistic leadership, occasional outbursts of nationalism. Istvan Tarrosy and Zoltan Voros discuss current developments in the Hungarian foreign policy by explaining the concept of the new global opening as frame of reference for analysis of the role, which Hungary would like to play in international relations. Concluding contribution in this reader comes from Andrea Schmidt who analyses economic transformation in Hungary in terms of a dilemam detour or impasse?

Grzegorz Pożarlik



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Build and legitimize Europe¹

Europe has built itself concretely, for several decades, with and for each one of us, sometimes against some, more or less well, more or less badly. The heirs to an old “mondialism” are delighted, like the partisans of an eternal and durable peace if not, the defenders of a market without obstacle, or the promoters of a dialog between the cultures. For all, or almost, positive aspects exist but for each one, or almost, some criticisms, sometimes severe, are addressed to a technocracy considered to be rigorous. Almost everybody agrees with the harmonization while any standardization is rejected. But which are the borders between the one and the other?

European construction and Europeaness

The European construction is institutional and political, of course, with the European Union or the neighbourhood partnerships. But it is also related on the evolution of the behaviours, the exchanges, the increase in mutual comprehension between the groups, the nations.

The young people of the “Erasmus generation” are mobile and realize both of their own evolution and of some problems, often state to regret a too long time for the reforms, the changes and the social evolutions they desire, so, sometimes, often, it is a disenchantment and a confusion of the impressions. Like other young people, they are Europeans, i.e. inhabited by a cultural “europeanity”, even political. Europeanity which is essential, which each own, which remains implicit and difficult to define, and yet which becomes obviousness at the time

¹ This chapter develops some specific topics presented during the allocution for the award of *Doctorat Honoris Causa* by the New Bulgarian University, May 19, 2014 in Sofia..

of certain expatriations. Europeanity, also, which is combined more than she is in opposition with nationalities.

But it is necessary to think about it. Always. And to reflect within the meaning of the evolution of the behaviours and the feelings. To try to understand the sufferings and introversions, the possible barbarisation of each one in front of a new fear of the Barbarians (Todorov, 2008). One needs a live together which is not only a live between us, in being at the same time convinced and anxious, to find means of acting, of transforming the reflection into action.

The identities can be murderous (Maalouf, 1998); they are also sometimes unhappy, even if it can seem difficult to follow Alain Finkielkraut with his mobilization of a national identity (2013).

The identities are processes like states, determined by the contexts as by the acts, the impressions and the feelings. They determine not memberships, but the feelings of belonging. These processes, identity mechanisms, precisely, seem to change. Each one can certainly understand, henceforth, its own identity evolution, through the mirror of the others, more or less similar, but also through its own reflection, that the Internet, in particular, sends back to each, in this environment of screens (Lipovetsky & Serroy, 2007). And it is necessary to think about certain concepts which helped to build us, learning how to reflect: the spaces, the territories, the political action, the social link in particular. Indeed, these new mobilities and these “mobile identities” seem well to mark an end of the territories and a revival of the spaces.

Nevertheless, if it is easy for a French to accept the idea that geographical logic does not make it possible (more) to identify the Europe politically, anchoring in the territory is still solid, often implicitly. This territory is indeed carrying memberships and of social links and the space one always constitutes a criterion of differentiation of these various social links. One territory only, one people only: here are the French, this “French people”, with his disparities, its differences, its inequalities, but within the framework of relative otherness, following centuries of ideological unification, with a linear historical construction which induces an immutable trinity of space/country/culture... But also till these murderous identities, precisely, because falling under a skimmed space, limited to some closed prospects, destroying the individuals unable to assume themselves because not being able to recognize the otherness and, at the same time, to recognize themselves.

For a “Westerner”, an experiment of life in Central and Eastern Europe allows to exceed the theory, to consider this situation differently. The territorial imbrication as in Slovakia, in North Romania or in Serbia does not call into question the citizenships, but imposes a differentiation with nationalities. Some identify themselves like Slovak of Romania, or Ruthenian of Slovakia. Their spaces are close and their villages compose a variegated mosaic where the groups preserve their languages and traditions. But it is not a question of “folklorism” or a particular attraction, even exceeded, for a static cultural history. The identitary framework is different and the processes too.

A native French of Rheims, is from Champagne, administratively like culturally, and descended from mixed generations, of waves of immigrations: Belgian, Polish, Italian then Algerian, Moroccan, Tunisian, Iranian... It is a country of immigration and not of emigration. The territory continues to explain and to combine, to level and to integrate.

It is not really the case, for example, in Eastern Slovakia: it is perhaps precisely the vicinity and its diversity which reinforce the identitary process, which implies this linguistic attachment. One can intend to speak German in Kezmarok and believe that in Levoca one speaks Russian... but people are Slovak, descended from an old immigration... they are not tourists!

Then, even if it is needed to relativize the principles of the empirists, from John Locke to Albert Einstein, and to consider that the experiment is not the only source of knowledge (Karl Popper), the meeting with the Central and Eastern Europe changes obviously the analysis like the impressions...

For as much, and independently of this experiment, our behaviours, our new social uses, challenge de facto this territory. The spaces are now different, overlapping, and dynamic; it is the time of networks (Manual Castells). Then which social link in this time of networks?

Traditionally, the sociological theory distinguishes three types of social links, resulting from the networks, from the communities and from the collective identity.

The networks are not new and exceed the territories since good a long time: networking, links, set of nodes are structures, formal or not, which, henceforth, with the Internet, do not make that exceed the traditional dimensions of spaces, but install a new space paradigm. The networks produce a history and links, install communities, and are nourished of rites, of signs, even of myths.

The individual, in his memberships to networks, thus takes part in some imbrications of a new type, in the immediacy, the permanent at the same time as the fugacious, or as the apparently fugacious. A new relation between space and time settles whereas the communities, and the individuals, always need project and history, prospect and continuity.

Which emotional relations assert themselves in these networks? How do communities build themselves and with which proximities?

The transformation of the relations between space and time has obviously implications on the constitutions of communities. Dominique Cardon indeed showed that these new networks did not imply a cancellation of the principle of proximity. The affect is well always in the centre of the social link and the meetings on the Internet are also, often principally, between people who know each other well, physically, emotionally, professionally.

It is rather a new typology of the communities which seems to emerge, between an open public and badly mastered, a shared private and a preserved intimate. The pupils continue their plays started in playground within the social networks; the students have hundreds of friends on Facebook, but communicate especially with those which they really know, physically.

These networks are openings, perhaps dangerous if the question is to try to preserve a separation like public/private, but who is really easily deceived? On the Internet, the role-play is perhaps easier, but the Web did not invent the usurpations of identity or of personality. The new uses facilitate these violations while allowing perhaps more easily their denunciation. The danger is perhaps rather the vulgarizing of security policy, resulting from a generalized dramatization...

It is important to wonder about the concept of proximity: a Justice, for example, is not inevitably better if it is close. Often, *a contrario*, it needs a distance, a ritual. Of course, it is essential to distinguish, after Durkheim, the community of the society: it is a key of comprehension of these imbrications of numerical communities which are not societies, but networks, that share the public and the private of members, sometimes revealing the intimacy.

The proximity, in this exploration of the social link, seems also beholden of affect, of emotion, of feeling, and not really of spatial or of temporal distance.

It is that the Internet hustles and transforms, certainly insidiously, the references. Only the jet lags, or the climate, can recall to the reality of space and of the time of the communications in real-time. The exchanges are immediate; the pleasure of waiting of a reply to a letter is henceforth of an old period registered in a past which is forgotten.

The uses of the Internet give new instruments to the emotional relations, to the communities, but also apply to the constitution of links of belonging, of resemblance, to the collective identities, to the dynamic processes of sharing of representations and common values.

Information, Spaces and Borders

In this “society of knowledge”, the information is omnipresent, easy to access (until now), often *de facto* unverifiable, which requires new competences of understanding and to be able to choose. In this context of “economy of knowledge”, the value is born from information, the old economic models are henceforth in relative survival, as for the written press in particular, and the political action seems exceeded.

It is of course not the Internet, in oneself, which creates or restores the social links, but the networks give new possibilities to all of doing it, independently or almost of the common policy which have, had, this issue, however!

The town, the “city”, polis, has well changed, became total, modelled by inhabitants moving, falling under a new relationship between the local and the global which are also expressed in digital *agora*.

If it is not possible to highlight the emergence of a European public space, the articulation of many local public spaces is essential. The place and the role of the policy, in this context, change. Who from now on produced the social link? It is necessary to wonder about the role of the policies, the churches, of the trade unions, but also, always, of the family or the school. The institutions “deinstitutionalize” themselves, deconsecrate themselves, while at the same time each one needs of sacred and symbols... and try to find these, perhaps, elsewhere now.

At the same time as the territory changes, the institutions lose their virginity, even if the collective identities remain often anchored in a national local, timeless, immutable, represented and transmitted. One can have badly with his country, of course, and suffer from a collective identitary deficiency, to be entrenched then in a more restricted local and in being bruised at the point to set up tight borders between oneself and the other, to reject of it the other in an unknown considered to be dangerous.

The borders are however necessary, it is necessary to make some, like Régis Debray explains, a praise (2010). Without border, no structuration, no construction. But which boundaries are we speaking about? One needs passages, not walls, rules of vicinity, not some logics of enclosure. It is at the same time necessary to be able to enter and let leave. The fortress worries us and there never was, on our planet, as many kilometres of walls, of erections in concrete that castrate the desires with a progressive acceptance of the prohibition of the other.

Perhaps alas, the European Union is only one set of Member States, whose, within some, the collective identities remain strongly related to nationality. But it is indeed a federation of States, because part of the sovereignty of each State from now on is given up, but we continue to organize, for example, the European elections in a national way, country by country. It restricts at the same time the choices of each one (why can't I vote for a German or a Polish European deputy?) and the prospects for legitimation of the institutions... The Europe needs active steps and symbols. We need more, everywhere, of concrete achievements and of symbols.

In the “hypermodern” societies, by taking of account the different relations that the social actors maintain with the institutions and the spaces, it is current to propose a new individualism, to describe the choices of each one taken according to convictions or personal interests, to highlight new freedoms of thought and of action, effects of new mobilities in the daily life.

This evolution, whose explanation is not as convincing as it can seem, would be dependent on the transformation of the mechanisms of collective identification and on a certain confusion of the feelings of belonging. No individualism can be however expressed in an isolated way and it is perhaps more realistic to try to describe how the relation between the uses, the mobilities and the identitary processes evolve.

It is necessary to continue to cultivate the ambiguity of the concept: a collective identity is at the same time specific to an individual and to a group, to a community.

Identify is to make similar. The identity henceforth imposes itself, without for all that this concept is always really specified. For as much, here is the relation, for the social sciences, between the being, the existence and the otherness.

One teaches with the students of first cycle that two great designs dominate the traditional sociology. Emile Durkheim is resolutely functionalist and explains that the identity is transmitted, mainly during childhood, and the socialization guarantees the stability of the social groups in time. For Max Weber, the identity is rather produced by particular contexts, within the framework of the professional experience, for example, or by other institutions like the school or the church. These two conceptions are complementary without being opposed, the identity processes are complex and composite, dynamic and relatively unstable... and one can suppose that in a turbulent and dubious context, identity instability can only increase.

This concept of identity, in particular in sociology, is included in the fundamental problem of the relationship between one and the others, between the individual one and the collective, between the singular and the plural, and, according to Lévi-Strauss, it is always to build... or to re-build (Dufoulon & Rouet, 2013). It is thus necessary to articulate the subjective identity, for oneself that psychology explores, with the social identity, for others, and with the objective identity.

Nobody born with an identity, except on an official paper, precisely an "identity card", evidence of a legal personality in a regulated society... and even if the civil status is well a component of the identity, this identity is imposed. This objective identity is the subject of a subjective appropriation, lies then in a collective identity, in the frame of a long process which invites besides to invent sometimes new categories: thus appeared the categories of teenagers, of young children, of young adults, often in connection with these reflections.

These processes contribute to the maturation of an identity feeling, to be and of belonging, and thus can be at the origin of sufferings, of ill-being, of discomfort. Because the integration of the objective does not go from oneself, it is enough to be convinced some to follow the debates on the transsexuality.

The feeling of belonging is in the centre of social dimension of the identity, but with multiple loyalties: the family, the group of pairs, the ethnos group, the nation... the Europe. The question is not to know how to formalize this feeling, but to try to understand to which

bases it applies. The pluridimensional aspect of the feeling of belonging is not new; each one belongs to castes, clans, social classes, nations, areas, countries, cities, districts, villages, suburbs, religious communities, ethnic communities, etc., but also to sexual groups and/or professional groups. All the combinations are possible.

The memberships can be by force, with social markings until on the body itself (Clastres, 1972) or with constraints whose violence is sometimes less obvious. The development of the exchanges, real or not, of the migrations and of the mobilities, develops de facto multiculturalism and relativizes the appropriation of the differences of oneself with the other.

Then it is necessary to consider this individualism in the current society, but while postulating that it can be an extension of the logics of collective membership to the logics of individual trajectory, of the personal and personalized composition within the framework of the identity mechanisms. This individualism is then related to the social enrolment of these new Europeans, from their personal history, and is not related to values which favour the personal interest to the collective.

Mobility and Identity

The identity processes thus have, consequently, a character more dynamic, related to mobile behaviours in the context of the networks. But it also seems that each one is much freer of his identity constructions, in connection with his choices, and even if it is difficult to follow certain researchers in psychology who develop the concept of “identity strategy”: who can really, and explicitly (consciously), know the effects of his choices on his identity evolution?

It is thus possible to consider that certain citizens have, henceforth, some possibilities to operate choices, on a European scale, which will make evolve, even transform, their identity, their feelings of belonging, and thus their eventual and possible political commitment, with an important distortion with institutions that remain related to static logics of belonging. But it is important not to analyse these evolutions in a loss of interest for the politics, perhaps even it is the opposite that occurs (Krasteva, 2013)!

It seems to exist also some new freedoms which get shape with the control of new choices, and thus of new responsibilities, of citizen, of European.

This evolution is not new and it is possible, after Louis Dumont and his analyses of the modern individualism and of the *homo aequalis*, to register the hypermodernity (Augé, 2009)

from the historical point of view, in long time, like the time of Braudel (1987), since the creation of the States, the urbanization to the global cities, the installation of educational systems, etc., that lead thus to this transformation of the societies in which the individuals have more and more the autonomy of their choices.

Last part of the suggested triptych: the europeanity, quality, feeling, characteristic that could connect, link. How to define it, if not to specify it?

Why not with common values, integrated since childhood, the family, the school and other institutions, but still by sharing of histories, symbols, memories. Indeed, Slovak, Polish, Bulgarians and French do not have the same history (written and taught), but they can share without believing in the illusion of the construction of a European history.

They need to write a history, to cultivate a memory, and the risk is obvious of an instrumentalisation of a historical construction, to put it at the service of an ideology, with some mythologies of the origins.

All in all, as it is a question of teaching Europe, the historical constructions integrate from now on a common part, within the European Union, in order to train the citizens conscious of the institutional rules. The unit would be at the price of this memory, of the assertion of duties of memory and even if the territory is not any more, everywhere, a crucial factor of identification, the politics that is pressed on old mechanisms seeks to keep it to continue to exist legitimately... It is probable that there could be a fast transformation, obviously!

The historical constructions, official or shared histories, contribute to the identifications, to the edification of “us” starting from references, from historical facts, from “great men” (more rarely women), from conquests, from empires, etc. These references are obviously dangerous when the territory seems to transcend the social groups: our constitutions (except in Hungary recently) build a regular framework to populations, sometimes delimit a territory, are the fruit of the springtime of peoples.

But the identities, as one saw, allow individuation and collectivization, by affiliation to groups of membership. It is well around central principles that the collective identities federate some pluralities of belonging of individuals and involve multiple linguistic practices yet non contradictory: “us, the Europeans... us, the French... us, the Parisians”, who, always, reveal the sharing, the common and less and less the territory.

We could avoid the image of the matriochkas, these encased Russian headstocks, to imagine the identitary articulations. They are rather like puzzles, with variable pieces and

jointing. The context and the uses have transformed the identity processes which traditionally were linked to the relationship between individual and societies in a definite space time. Thus, the framework of the production of power, like that of the communications and the discontinuities, has modified deeply the identity searches.

Then is it necessary to be delighted, to be satisfied, to accept it or not? And would that change something? The markers of identities evolve, some lose their importance, and others appear. These markers are juxtaposed without being complementary: professional, political, trade-union identifications but also local, regional, ethnic... Thus, of the identity crises are all the more difficult to surmount that the structuring contexts change (Erikson, 1980). This analyse for the individuals is certainly transposable for the groups. In these quick changes and unforeseen for much, the markers seem in loss of direction.

These identity crises can generate new identities, in particular determined by the social links described above, in territories of a new kind, framed by new boundaries, induced by the consequences of the mobile behaviours.

Then, are these evolutions external or internal consequences for each? New freedoms and responsibilities settle, obviously together with constraints of another kind, with new postures. Without calling into question the social determinisms, the reality and the weight of the classes and social categories, the brakes and the obstacles, the consequences of the reserved habitats, of parallel destinies, the absurd enrichment of some, it acts nevertheless, in all lucidity, to cultivate a confidence in the institutions that we animate.

The need for Europe is latent, we are there, we are in, and we constitute it. The Europe exists only because we realize it, because we can, we could give him sense.

So the described evolutions very generally, of the territories and spaces, the appropriations and the repulsions, the emotional and social links, the solidarity and the exclusions, provoke the adoption of different postures. The exchanges call other exchanges and trivialize the discoveries, each one becomes aware of a space de facto reduced, easy, accessible, and familiar; in these logics of relative differentiations, these “diversities” and these “exceptions”. In each group, the cultural expressions are exceptional.

For as much, it seems now completely exceeded to try to engage citizens in the European project by erect it as a model, or by installing a permanent museum of the great men who built the Europe, by commemorating dates, decisions, treaties...

Each one must make its discovery, and to discover that the Europe is banal, finally. Thus Europe continues its building. The exceptions can meet in a banal manner, in institutions whose legitimation can continue only in a particular balance with the institutions of the Member States. It is legitimate to project in the European institutions of the virtues which one considers as absent within the national bodies. This is legitimate, but illusory, because the European construction starts only from the local institutions, in a moving articulation and some equilibrium to be consolidated permanently. The Europe cannot build itself in the negation or the rejection of the local institutions, because it can only, like the identity mechanisms, be nourished of complex articulations, each element consolidating the others.

Discover or ignore

The conclusion of these some lines of reflection mobilizes an author perfectly forgotten in France, and yet craftsman of a particular regionalism: that of Brittany, whose some relents perspire in the French media when farmers demonstrate against the government decisions or when the government undertakes to reform the administrative “milfoils” by reforming the departments and joining together some regions.

Morvan Lebesque has published in 1970 an essay about the French democracy: *How can one be Breton?* He explains why on this territory, the regional language disappeared (it was reintroduced since), that he is not separatist, regionalist, separatist, that he is unaware of what would be a Breton “race”, and if he is itself or not of this origin...

So this French of civil status, who “at every moment assumes [his] situation of French” considers that a belonging to Brittany is “only one optional quality” that he can perfectly disavow or misjudge.

The question is not, then, what is Brittany? Like the Europe, it is always possible to theorize and to delimit, but rather what is to be Breton? “*I was unaware of a long time that I was Breton... French without problem, it is thus necessary for me to live the Brittany in surplus, or, for better say, in conscience: if I lose this conscience, the Brittany ceases being in me; if all the Breton ones lose it, it absolutely ceases being*”.

Then, to be Breton like to be European, “to each one, the come age, the discovery or the ignorance”.

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Conceptualising the EU as new kind of power in late-Westphalian international relations. The case of EU policy towards Ukrainian crisis.

In what follows I intend to examine major theoretical positions in debate on the EU as new kind of power in late-Westphalian international relations with special emphasis given on the EU's Eastern neighbourhood policy in light of Euromaidan protest and its implications.

First, the concept of the EU as normative power will be explained as set against discussion of the EU's international role and identity in terms of neo-medieval and cosmopolitan empire.

Secondly, I will analyse the EU's involvement in recent Ukrainian crisis in terms of *war of empires* or, less metaphorically, the EU and Russia competing for normative supremacy in their shared neighbourhood.

Leading hypothesis of this analysis is that the idea of the EU as normative power retains its allure to the societies of the EU's neighbourhood – Ukrainian society especially, which was clearly the case during Euromaidan protest.

Simultaneously, imagined, magnetic allure of the EU's as powerful, normative actor on international arena is distorted by increasing awareness of public opinion in specially new EU member states and democratising societies of the EU Eastern Neighbourhood stemming from the EU's powerlessness towards Russia's aggressive *Machtpolitik* towards shared neighbourhood.

In conclusion I will argue that unlike *Machtpolitik* power game, the EU wins normative war of empires with Russia as trust and solidarity are not what international community display towards Putin's Russia after Crimea's annexation and demonstration of Russian military power in South-Eastern Ukraine.

EU as (new kind of) international relations power: a conceptual debate

Many have tried to conceptualise the EU's international role and, consequently, to grasp its complex and ambiguous identity as international relations actor. Just like in case of analysing the EU as *sui generis* political system, it becomes evident that there is no consensus among scholars dealing with this research problem as to what kind of concept denotes the EU's international role and identity in convincing way. Here Jacques Delors is frequently invoked with his metaphor of the EU being an unidentified political object as conceptual rescue belt, a common denominator in otherwise polyphonic discourse among scholars representing main stream international relations theory, international law or sociology of power. Jan Zielonka - whom we know, among others, as the author of seminal monograph conceptualising the EU in terms of a neo-medieval empire – contributes to this debate by explaining conceptual ambiguity related to the EU's international role and identity:

„If the Union is not a super-state in the making, what is it? Is it a kind of UPO (Unidentified Political Object), as Jacques Delors, former President of European Commission, used to say? Does the Union's uniqueness prevent any analogies and comparisons that would give us some clues for understanding or even predicting its behavior? Are we at the mercy of astrologers and fortune tellers? The answer is: no! In my view, the enlarged Union increasingly resembles an empire and this has profound implications for understanding its internal and external politics. However, the Union is not an empire like contemporary America or nineteenth century Britain. Its polycentric governance, fuzzy borders and soft forms of external power projection resemble the system we knew in the Middle Ages, before the rise of nationstates, democracy, and capitalism.” (2008, p.2)

I shall return in greater detail to Zielonka's concept of the EU's as neo-medieval empire along with analysis of Ulrich Beck's concept of the EU as cosmopolitan empire as examples of alternative approach in subsequent part of this chapter.

Historically, conceptualisation of the EU's international role and identity has predominantly been framed within civil power Europe discourse coined by François Duchêne. We trace this debate as far back as early 70's of the 20th century. Duchêne depicted European Community in terms of an „exemplar of a new stage in political civilisation. The European Community in particular would have a chance to demonstrate the influence which can be

wielded by a large political co-operative formed to exert essentially civilian forms of power (1973, p.19).

With introduction of Common Foreign and Security Policy in the Treaty of Maastricht followed by consolidation of Common Security and Defence Policy of the EU a debate erupted whether the EU should or could evolve towards a more coercive international relations actor, especially taking into account the character of security challenges the EU has been facing in its immediate neighborhood. The question that began to be asked by policy-makers and scholars alike has been if the EU should or could be actively, meaning militarily involved in managing security challenges in Europe and beyond its borders taking into account an overwhelming public consensus across the EU societies concerning the EU to be and remain civil, non-military international power in international relations. On the other hand, from early 90's of the 20th century with an outbreak of civil war in Yugoslavia it became ever more evident that the EU cannot afford staying aside of all sorts of old and new security threats within and beyond its borders if, precisely, wishes to be perceived as ethical force for good or a model of peaceful and democratic, par excellence normatively rooted international relations system. The debate whether or not EU should strengthen its coercive capabilities in order to remain an influential international relations actor accelerated in the aftermath of 9/11 and Iraq war and their implications.

Nicole Gnesotto, among others, came up with a diagnosis that: „The idea of Europe as a purely civil power is behind us. The great debate of the 1980s over Europe as a civil power or a military power definitely seems to be a thing of the past (2004, p.1, cited in Smith, p.1). Not surprisingly this was the time when questions about EU's declaratory, normative foreign policy triggered widespread attention.

Ian Manners has been cited by many as founding father of normative power Europe discourse, which, by the time it was introduced, marked a new space for academic debate and policy-making analyses as to the most desirable direction, which the EU foreign and security policy should follow. Mannersian approach to conceptualisation of the EU as sui generis international relations normative power is based upon assumption that: „the EU promotes a series of normative principles that are generally acknowledged, within the United Nations system, to be universally applicable [...] nine substantive normative principles which both constitute, and are promoted by, the EU: [...] sustainable peace, freedom, democracy, human

rights, rule of law, equality, social solidarity, sustainable development and good governance” (2008, p.66)

Manners’ conceptualisation of the EU’s international role has been to large extent a breakthrough within confines of civil power Europe discourse that dominated scholarly debate both during the Cold War and in the first decade of 90’s of the 20th century.

As Manners argues explicitly: “an emphasis on EU cosmopolitics within normative power representations clearly indicates a huge change of political culture away from the Westphalian frames of reference in which many discussions of civilian power take place [...] Although Monnet and Duchêne’s aims were to change international relations, the frame of reference was always the interstate system; discussions of changing the international system itself are either muted or absent. Empirically, these two approaches can be differentiated in terms of Westphalian culture, such as civilian vs. normative means of influence and force” (2004, pp.3-4)

Interestingly enough we find a lot of similarities in Mannersian approach to conceptualisation of the EU’ international role in terms of ‘EU cosmopolitics’ with Ulrich Beck’s concept of Europe as cosmopolitan empire. Both approaches are based on normative expansion as key feature of EU polity. European Neighbourhood Policy is frequently referred in this context as empirical evidence supporting such assumption.

Manners’ concept of normative power Europe triggered a lively critical reaction. Adrian Hyde-Price and Helen Sjursen represent clear cases of such criticism. Hyde-Price criticises Manner’s assumption that we can conceptualise the EU in terms of an independent, normative sui generis international relations actor. Hyde-Price as one of the most prominent advocates of neo-realism in international relations theory claims that: “...[T]here is a fundamental contradiction at the heart of the EU’s identity and role as an international actor [...] no actor can effectively pursue its own interests in a diverse and pluralist international system, and claim to be ‘doing good’ by others, at the same time—unless one uncritically accepts liberal–idealist claims that there are cosmopolitan or universal values and interests that transcend those of individual political communities.” (2008, p.31-32)

Helen Sjursen, on the other hand, focuses in her critique of normative power Europe theory on lack of conceptual clarity and coherence as main shortcomings of this approach. As Sjursen argues: „existing conceptions of the EU as a ‘civilian’/‘normative’/‘civilizing’ power

lack sufficient precision [...] Implying that the EU is a ‘force for goodness’ they lack the necessary criteria and assessment standards to qualify or substantiate such conclusions. (2006, p.1) „In order to rescue the argument of the EU as a ‘normative’ power - Sjursen suggests - that the core feature of a putative normative or civilizing power would be that it acts in order to transform the parameters of power politics through a focus on strengthening the international legal system.”(ibid.) Consequently Sjursen argues that: „from such a perspective there is a tension in the EU’s approach to international affairs.” (ibid.)

EU as new kind of empire: an alternative way of conceptualising the EU’s international role and identity

Against the main stream discussion of the EU being conceptualised as civil or normative power, we find an alternative conceptualisations emphasising imperial character of the EU’s influence on international relations. However, it needs to be explained that this imperialism has a substantially different character than the one we know from ancient history and as well as modern European history. We have in mind here conceptions depicting the EU as post-modern, cosmopolitan or neo-medieval forms of empire. Jan Zielonka with the concept of neo-medieval empire Europe and Ulrich Beck advocating the concept of Europe as cosmopolitan empire are most prominent examples of such alternative thinking on Europe’s role and identity in late-Westphalian international relations.

Let us begin examination of this alternative approach to conceptualisation of the EU’s international role by pointing at key features of Jan Zielonka’s concept of neo-medieval empire Europe.

Zielonka explains no historical analogy in applying the very term ‘empire’ to denote essence and substance of the EU polity. As he argues; „I never intended to suggest any historical analogy by using the term neo- medieval empire. For me the neo-medieval empire is an abstract paradigm describing the nature of the emerging European polity. My paradigm is empirically grounded, but it relates to the situation of today. And I contrast this paradigm with the paradigm of a Westphalian state that is often used in the literature on European integration. The Westphalian state is about concentration of power, hierarchy, sovereignty and clear- cut identity. The neo-medieval empire is about overlapping authorities, divided

sovereignty, diversified institutional arrangements and multiple identities. The Westphalian state is about fixed and relatively hard external border lines, while the neo-medieval empire is about soft border zones that undergo regular adjustments. The Westphalian state is about military impositions and containment, the neo-medieval empire is about export of laws and modes of governance. Both paradigms represent a conceptually possible expression of political authority organized at the national and transnational level, but I argue that the recent wave of enlargement makes it impossible for the Union to become a Westphalian state. In fact, the Union increasingly resembles a neo-medieval empire.” (2008, p.3-4)

EU Eastern enlargement of 2004 is given by Zielonka as evidence of imperial character of European polity. Still, this is a new type of imperial polity - Zielonka seems to argue - based not so much on territorial conquest and economic exploitation but rather on normative hegemony. As Zielonka explains; ‘The new Europe may well be neo-medieval, but is it also imperial? Here again, enlargement with its comprehensive and strict policy of conditionality suggests the Union’s external policy is truly imperial. Through enlargement the Union was able to assert its control over unstable and poor neighbors. True, the post-communist countries were not “conquered” but invited to join the EU, and they did so quite eagerly. Moreover, at the end of the accession process they were offered access to the EU’s decision-making instruments and resources. (2008, p.3).

Another example of an alternative approach to conceptualisation of the EU’ international role and identity comes from Ulrich Beck. In his analysis of cosmopolitan Europe as framework for emergence of new kind of power and society in times of second modernity, Beck comes up with the idea of EU being an empire of law and consensus (2005).

When answering the question; „How will a European empire of law and consensus become possible? Beck diagnosis is that: „the concept of cosmopolitanism is the key to understanding and shaping new forms of political authority that have emerged in Europe beyond the nation-state.” (2005, p.8). Thus: „[the] cosmopolitan empire of Europe is notable for its open and cooperative character at home and abroad and therein clearly contrasts with the imperial predominance of the United States. Europe’s undeniably real power is not decipherable in terms of nation-states. It lies instead in its character as a model of how Europe succeeded at transforming a belligerent past into a cooperative future, how the European miracle of enemies becoming neighbors could come about. It is this special form of soft world

power that is developing a special radiance and attraction that is often as underestimated in the nation-state mold of it” (ibid. p.6).

EU’s current dilemmas of normativity. War of empires or why does the EU win long-term normative power game with Russia over Ukraine?

The Treaty of Lisbon itself and the new European Neighbourhood Policy did not reduce a kind of cognitive dissonance in the perception of the EU as ‘normative power’ (Manners) but also as ‘normative hegemon’ (Huakalla). Discrepancy between the declaratory role of global normative actor and the real ‘civilising’ power (Smith) became leitmotif in the discourse on the EU external policy-making.

One of the crucial aspects of the relative weakness of the EU in pursuing its normative policy is the external perception of EU foreign policy in terms of inconsistency between the declaratory normative policy goals and real hegemonic (or rather paternalistic) instruments of policy-making.

Recent Ukrainian crisis could be acknowledged one of the major challenges to the EU’s foreign policy nowadays as it takes place in the EU’s direct neighborhood. The crisis began with massive pro-EU protests after former Ukrainian president Viktor Janukovich had refused to sign association agreement with the EU. For many observers both in Ukraine and EU, the EU’s reaction to Janukovich’s violence against the Euromaidan protesters was a sign of the EU’s limited ability to implement effectively its foreign policy goals as identified in the Eastern Neighbourhood agenda.

The feeling of disappointment had spread across Europe as the member states demonstrated limited ability to adopt effective counter measures against Janukovich regime violent reaction to Euromaidan protest.

This lack of prompt and effective reaction to crisis situation in the EU’s Eastern neighbourhood has deeper roots in the EU’s international identity crisis, which we can observe from the very conception of the CFSP. As Molly Krasnodębska commented on the EU’s reluctance to adopt effective counter measures against violence in Maidan square: “This reluctance is reflective of the EU’s uncertainty about its identity as an international actor, i.e. its self-conception of the role it should play in the international environment and how it

should represent its values and norms externally. During the Cold War, 'European' identity rested on protection of freedom and democracy in Europe against totalitarianism represented by the Soviet bloc. With the downfall of Communism in Europe and disappearance of clear distinctions between "good" and "evil", the EU's role shifted to promotion of its norms and institution outward. Its self-identification as a "normative power" shapes an international policy based on soft power and dissemination of the European model of democracy, particularly visible in its enlargement policy. Recently, in light of the Eurozone crisis, rising Euro-skepticisms and enlargement fatigue, the EU seems to have lost some of its soft power appeal. It is therefore even more remarkable to see thousands of Ukrainians waving EU flags, as they risk their lives in the anti-government protests" (Krasnodębska 2014, p. 2).

Still for post-Soviet societies of the EU Eastern Partnership - especially for their pro-democratic segments - the EU retains magnetic allure as those societies refer to experience of Poland and Baltic states, which managed to anchor themselves in the Western economic and security environment, which in turn enabled them to choose democracy, rule of law, civic freedoms and economic well-being instead of Russian political and economic supervision, corruption and oligarchic rule.

Again as Krasnodębska argues: "Awareness of these differences among the Ukrainian population undoubtedly motivated the protests. Thus, despite internal problems, the EU still constitutes a powerful symbol in a country like Ukraine" (Krasnodębska 2014, *ibid.*)

Another point of view in this debate comes from Joris Larik (2014), who explains why does the EU win long-term normative power game with Russia by emphasising substantial difference in motives, instruments and justification of foreign policy-making between EU and Russia.

According to Joris Larik: "annexation of Crimea could lead more than one commentator to the conclusion that the EU has once again failed completely in its foreign policy; that it does not have anything to counter the onslaught of military might and leverage in terms of energy supply; that diplomatic condemnations and economic sanctions (or incentives) are only a specious surrogate for real foreign policy and real power. According to this narrative, the EU will forever be confined to trying to catch up in the world and will never boldly take the lead. But this view is short-sighted in several regards." (2014, p.1)

In order to explain mechanism of long-term normative impact of the the EU foreign policy one needs to take into account specific non-state character of the EU diplomacy, which ceretainly places the EU beyond traditional, Westphalian paradigm of foreign policy. As Jorik explains specific feature of the EU diplomacy as contrasted with classic state foreign policy: “The EU does not have a ‘strongman’; it does not have its Putin. EU has strong institutions. These institutions are not built on sand, but are founded on a common set of values. They orient their actions according to a catalogue of common objectives, which also extend to the domain of foreign policy. It is these values and objectives, alongside the economic attraction of the internal market, which draws European states from the post-Soviet area closer to the EU.” (ibid. p. 3)

By the way of concluding reflections on normative versus *Realpolitik* power game within contemporary international relations one can refer to the obsrvations made by Joris Larik who argues that: “in the emerging multipolar world, in order to be a ‘pole of attraction’ instead of a ‘pole of repulsion’ more than military might (and leverage in terms of energy supply) is required. From this vantage point, the Crimean crisis did not expose European weakness. Instead, it has revealed more clearly than ever the lack of any normative basis of Putin’s foreign policy, and ultimately its weakness and lack of sustainability. The current crisis concerning Ukraine is not a make-or-break for the EU. However, it shatters Russia’s credibility to represent a lasting vision of global governance for the coming decades. (ibid.)

This observation certainly encourages more emphasis given on normative perspective on study of the EU’s internationalrole and identity.

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Totality Thoughts and Fear of Totalitarianism in the past and contemporary international relations. Truth and Responsibility from the Perspective of an Attitude towards the Other by Jakob Leib Talmon and Emmanuel Levinas.

The main problem discussed in the article is the problem of totalitarianism and totalitarian thinking. Based on Talmon's and Levinas' analysis and critique of totalitarianism and total thinking, the author focuses on the signs of total thinking and traditions of totalitarian thinking criticized in the twentieth century. In English as well as in French, totalitarianism and total thinking have the same source found in the etymologies of these concepts. Analyzing criticism of totalitarian thinking in philosophy and modern history we want to show the danger of totalitarianism, which begins with one's approach to the Other. Despite the diversities between political and ethical orders, ethics is giving rise to reflection on politics and international relations, with keeping a full autonomy of both. An important element, subject to fluctuations just as human consciousness, is the archetype of understanding truth, freedom and responsibility. As shown in the position of Levinas and Talmon extreme rationalism can lead to exclusion and discrimination. European culture is based on reciprocity and mutual recognition. It is accepting autonomy that leads to interpersonal and international relations. A clear proof of this rests in the creation of an alliance among the countries – the foreign policy, which in the case of the EU becomes an internal acceptance of the Other in Europe. Attitude towards the Europe of homelands and the European homeland, which cares for its individuals, results from two schools of thought mentioned by Talmon. In the era of the European crisis, Ukraine – Russia relations, and the crisis in Syria, we directly face the possibility of creating a new system of thought, such as totality with the exclusion of separate and different positions, which leads to totalitarian autocracy excluding human rights. This mechanism of practical application, and practical use of human rights to strengthen one's power is reopening a can of worms in foreign policy.

Key words: totalitarianism, totality, liberty and totalitarian democracy, attitude towards another.

Introduction

It seems that the problem of totalitarianism has become an irrevocable past bearing no influence on contemporary societies, international relations and contemporary politics of Europe. Political events of recent years and even months, such as the Ukrainian issue, as well as the growth of support for populist, anti-European, and anti-democratic parties in Europe provoke fears for the future of the old continent. In this article I would like to present the problem of totalitarianism as a system that rejects the problem of the other man, the Other. This brief notion conceals, in fact, a lot of content that influences the life of an individual as well as social and international relations. One of the key problems that lies within the expression *the Other man* is the relation of one man to another, a relation to the one who is different from me. It is not about explaining who the other one to me is, or specifying the group that could be identified as an ethnic or moral minority, but the fact that any person we encounter in daily life is the Other. The philosophers have discovered that man can become familiar with another man only through the perspective of his own consciousness. If this is so, the Other is only an image of my thinking. I cannot refer to him directly, only through my consciousness. It is how the Other emerges and I can attempt to understand him by my own means, however he continuously escapes my perception. Extreme solipsistic ideas lead to creating a system that is being implemented throughout history. This reality undergoes a process of changes irrevocably leading to a goal, the final form. In his *phenomenology of the Spirit*, Hegel presents a similar process that the ideologists of National Socialism, fascism and Marxist-Leninist appeal to. The means by which developing a system and eliminating differences lead to the emergence of totalitarian party can easily be portrayed by the example of Benito Mussolini, who endows the term with positive connotations, namely saying that it is just politics heading towards a formulated goal².

² Mussolini repeatedly states that all areas of life should be subordinate to the state. "Everything within the state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state". In his essay *The doctrine of fascism*, which most likely had not even been authored by Mussolini, but by Giovanni Gentile, the main ideologist of fascism in Italy, the term "totalitarian" arises. This doctrine does not recognize the Other, another man, but respects only the state, the idea of a homogeneous nation, guided by a single idea, the idea of the nation. "And if liberty is to be the attribute of the real man, and not of that abstract puppet envisaged by individualistic Liberalism, Fascism is for liberty. And for the only liberty which can be a real thing, the liberty of the State and of the individual within the State.

However, totalitarianism represents thinking in a closed system. What currently is called the totalitarian system is the result of thinking based on the entire picture, i.e. being a man of unified thought, or as Thomas Aquinas calls it: *the man of one book* (homo unius libri). The threat of totalitarianism mainly consists of limiting the thought to one idea, one goal. This dependence is easily seen in the comparison of words ‘totalitarianism’ and ‘totality’. The 20th century totalitarianisms had found rich breeding grounds within the mass culture, which demanded authoritarian order and appointing a goal for the state. At present nobody intends to develop a totalitarian nation, but it is, in fact, happening. In my article I would like to present the interdependence of totalitarianism and totality on the basis of Levinas’ and Talmon’s philosophy and their perception of reality. Although Levinas renounces politics, his philosophy emerges as a polemic with totalitarian thinking, which at present is to be seen on the social and international relations levels. Being fully aware of stretching the meaning of philosophy, whose aim is to present the dialogue between one man and another, into the needs of politics or political outlook, I intend to present the foundation of political ideas based on philosophical thinking, only seemingly very distant from political thinking. However, Levinas attempts to face the experience of holocaust, the experience of war, and ask the question how it was possible. Talmon tries to do it as well pointing to the criticism of Messianic and Enlightenment ideas, which lead to the reduction of thinking to pragmatism. Levinas attempts to overcome his critique of the system and existence only within one’s own self by presenting that one can only preserve his own identity through experiencing the Other. To do this, we will require new means of expression and to gain new sensitivity to the needs of the Other. Levinas provides a novel principle for ethics as well as religious thinking. He is trying to recuperate the idea lost by Enlightenment, however affords it with a new meaning. Ethics is no longer seen as a conflict of values, but more of an opening for the Other, the one who is separated from me. According to him religion is a bond (religio – bond together)³ connecting one man to another, however the eschatological dimension represents impossibility of surpassing the otherness as the other man is a mystery to me. He cannot become me, but we can relate by language, by speaking to one another.

Therefore, for the Fascist, everything is in the State, and nothing human or spiritual exists, much less has value, - outside the State. In this sense Fascism is *totalitarian*, and the Fascist State, the synthesis and unity of all values, interprets, develops and gives strength to the whole life of the people.” Compare: B. Mussolini, *The Doctrine of Fascism*, Florencja 1935.

³ E. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, Pittsburgh 1996, p. 40.

The dependence of totalitarianism on the total thinking makes us pose the question whether to separate the moral order (moral order) from political order (order aimed at keeping peace)⁴. It is an important division as the authoritarian power, or totalitarian authority reaches for arguments rooted in the language of ethics, although in fact they are just a simplification of issues presented by moral philosophy. It does not by any means signify that politics is doomed to be immoral, but that it has different goals to reach, despite the fact that these two orders are in a mutual relation. Contemporary problems of social and political relations, which tend to be totalitarian, are based on these two orders becoming one and losing their own separate higher goals. The moral project executed at present aims at rejecting the Other, expressing contempt to whatever is not mine as affiliated with this that is immoral. The order can emerge again if we apply the moral idea, eliminating the Other. This presently is the aim of Putin, who is pointing to the necessity of fighting the Western demoralization and his return to the empire is based on this doctrine⁵. It is a good example of total thinking that is consequently being transformed into totalitarianism, exclusion of pluralism and cooperation. After the Second World War, thinkers and philosophers asked themselves how it was possible for Europe, the cradle of democracy, to become the seedbed of human extermination. Many of them viewed this problem in the perspective of relations between science and politics. As a very striking example, we can mention the Weimer University, right next to which a labour camp was located. Philosophical and historical analysis of the past century can present the issue of totality (total thinking within a system) and totalitarianism (totalitarian politics) that could become a challenge for us in the near future. The reverse process is only possible with a more profound reflection on man fulfilled by meeting the Other. In a political sense, however, we need reflections on democratization and mutual acceptance processes as well as bilateral relations. Nevertheless, the process of democratization is not possible without the analysis of the Other.

The example of Talmon and his diversification of democracy as well as an attempt to overcome the hostility of Levinas present new principles for human thought, which now must

⁴ Ernst- Wolfgang Böckenförde, analyzing the causes why in 1993 Catholic Church supported National Socialism, considers the problem of modern democracy in which fundamental rights do not provide an order within the state. This on the one hand indicates the separation of these two orders, and on the other, emphasizes necessity of their mutual coexistence. See: E-W. Böckenförde, *Wolność-państwo-Kościół*, Kraków 1994, p. 31.

⁵ Putin, referring to the idea coined by Alexander Dugin - Eurasianism - wants to rebuild the empire presenting a dialectical vision of the world. Russia is located around two foreign cultures: European and Asian. European culture is recognized as spreading demoralization and alien values as well as cult of the individual. The main objective is to build a new empire against them, within which geopolitical order will be identical to moral order. See: J. Smirnova, „Putins Vordenker, ein rechtsradikaler Guru“, *Die Welt*, 11 July 2014, K. Holm, „Auf diesen Mann hört Putin“, *Franfurter Allgemeine*, 16 June 2014.

make room for goodness instead of value. By making the reality of the two thinkers more familiar we will be able to take a closer look at the threats as well as attempts to overcome the tendency to turn in on oneself, and build a system. They express particularly important ideas, such as being open to the Other. We need to emphasize that Hegel's dialectics based on the thesis, antithesis and synthesis is being criticised by both philosophers. The extreme form of such is known from the Marxist doctrine. However, as it has seemed for the last 25 years, this dialectics had been made history thanks to the idea of solidarity⁶, which was also partly based on the thought of Emanuel Levinas, as well as on the philosophy of dialogue. I mean here the attempt to reflect on the ethics of solidarity and defeating Hegel's dialectics mentioned by Józef Tischner, among others⁷. His reflection goes back to the Christian tradition, and also to the philosophy of dialogue. We can use two notions within this meaning: *truth* and *responsibility*. In the contemporary meaning of the word, the truth cannot be treated, in the language of ethics as well as international relations, as the traditional definition of truth, according to which, the truth is the compliance of the object and intellect, whose reality must be in concord with our representation of it and which leads to the idealistic vel extremely pragmatic definition of the world. It should, however, be based on transparency, on the attempt of it being discovered by man. In this case we need to take into account hermeneutics, according to which our circumstances in specific situation, specific reference and specific experience of the world are decisive. Talmon as well as Levinas emphasize the necessity of supporting the world on one specific experience, excluding extreme rationalism and idealism. They both blame the European Enlightenment thought for the violence resulting from the extreme form of this thinking. Thus, it is important for them to show what reality is, the source of experiencing the truth about man and his actions.

Levinas and Talmon differ significantly in their understanding of reality. While Talmon addresses the issue of totality from a historical perspective, analysing the social and cultural phenomena which influenced the emergence and propagation of national totalitarianism in the twentieth century, Levinas' major works do not deal with the problem of historicity, and employ instead concepts of *sensitivity* and *experience of the Other*, two terms which carry a philosophy that rejects the thoroughly European thought focused on totality. These two different perceptions can be connected thanks to the concept of the totality. While Levinas criticizes its philosophical significance, Talmon questions its political and historical significance.

⁶ J. Tischner, *The Spirit of solidarity*, San Francisco 1982.

⁷ J. Tischner, *Filozofia człowieka dla duszpasterzy i artystów*, Kraków 1991, pp. 118.

The historical and philosophical perspective in regard to the issue of totality and totalitarian mentality is founded in fact on two concepts: *truth* and *responsibility*. If we were to sum all its different aspects, we can conclude that Talmon's analysis is based on truth, while Levinas' one focuses on responsibility. However, we clearly observe that both Levinas and Talmon demonstrate a general intention of departing from the perceptions founded in totality. The two systems are convergent not only as far as their starting point is concerned, but also in their critique of freedom as defined by Kant and his successors. This analysis leads the author of *Totality and Infinity* to eschatological thought which goes beyond the discourse of the Greek metaphysics and its reinterpretation in European culture. Levinas departs from totality to move toward a transcendent relationship with the Other, and Talmon – toward renewed reconsideration of the foundations of social, cultural and political life. Levinas' model employs the concepts of the exterritorialism and the eschatology in order to produce a new basis for metaphysics. Talmon, on the other hand, analyzes political messianism, the French Revolution and the contemporary history to arrive at the sources of totalitarianism. Talmon's critique is based on rational thinking, rational reflection on the history of ideas and the basis of political culture, the roots of democracy and its true foundation. For both philosophers, overcoming totality signifies living *with* and *for* the Other. Talmon does not ignore philosophical issues, one example being his *Romanticism and Revolt In Europe 1815-1848*, in which he considers the problem of Kant's and Marx's philosophy. Talmon points out two groups from which German socialism derives: that inspired by Hegel and that following Marx. Kant's philosophy is presented as preceding the rise of socialism, and at the same time as a source of inspiration. The analysis of Kant's philosophy found in the work makes Talmon's and Levinas' paths cross. Kant's enlightenment idea promoting the freedom of man in relation to the moral imperative (act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law) and its confrontation with the determined world does not yet refer to the basis of a philosophical question asking for the source. In Kant's view, there is no meeting between one man and another, however, if there is, it is only considered in a perspective of free will through the moral imperative. Nevertheless, another man as a person does not exist. Kant's freedom is based on the Enlightenment idea, whose key element is independence, sovereignty and its confrontation with causation, but still, it is them dominating over spontaneity and transparency, which we affiliated with the notion of truth. Only after the 20th century events there emerged a necessity to contemplate them again. Another notion that has been changed into a contemporary meaning is the notion of responsibility. Just as truth and freedom, responsibility also needed

some diversification⁸. We can speak of responsibility in the sense of “respondere”, responsibility as answering to something and the most popular use nowadays: to assume responsibility or call to account. In international politics this difference bears significant consequences. Calling to account is the result of responsibility seen as answering for something that emerged as a consequence of establishing a relation, responsibility as “respondere”. The present international situation shows us the necessity to take action for the disrupted order and breached international agreements.

Therefore, our analysis should turn toward the examination of the question of freedom and totality, as it gives rise to the issue of responsibility and historical truth. Having examined two types of democracy, Talmon opts for liberal democracy. Levinas, on the other hand, departs from freedom moving towards ethical responsibility. Both of these confrontations head towards the criticism of Enlightenment rationalism, but also irrationalism, which result in all sort of aberrations.

1. *Liberal democracy versus totalitarian democracy*

When presenting the origins of the contemporary political thought and cultural issues Talmon points to two movements of European thought that followed the French revolution. Talmon distinguishes two types of democracy: *liberal* and *totalitarian democracy*, which differ in the fact that while the former is based on the trial and error method, the latter – on a sole acceptable political approach. Liberal democracy perceives politics as a product of spontaneous human thought and on this basis, it aims at the creation of a political system. Both *liberal democracy* and *totalitarian democracy* are founded on freedom, with this difference, however, that while liberal thinking identifies freedom with spontaneous action, totalitarian ideology – “In the pursuit and attainment of an absolute collective purpose”⁹. Totalitarian democracy aims to eliminate all that is different than the intended purpose. In the system, truth, which has the attributes of the absolute, is an objective which should be put into practice by using any means, including the morally wrong ones. Earlier liberation from coercion and focusing on individualism is not an obstacle for a totalitarian democracy to move towards its perfect realization. Totalitarian democracy consists in a pattern of coercion and centralization, but it does not reject the values of eighteenth century liberal individualism,

⁸ E. Levinas, *Totality...*, p. 83.

⁹ J. L. Talmon, *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy*, London 1952, p. 2.

instead bringing to its perfection the ideal of a period when "the power of State, unchecked by any intermediate agencies, became unlimited. This exclusive relationship between man and States implied conformity. It was opposed to both the diversity which goes with a multiplicity of social groups, and the diversity resulting from human spontaneity and empiricism. In Jacobinism individualism and collectivism appear together for the last time precariously by the state in accordance with an exclusive and universal pattern"¹⁰ Talmon describes the mechanism of the change of the paradigm from that obtaining during the Enlightenment to one that gave rise to totalitarian democracy ideology. Communist Babouvism combines the essence of freedom and its strengthening by the State, and ensures its survival thanks to the power of the state. Such a belief results in significant change in the perception of the state, as everyone's will must converge. The individual and collective human will can be expressed only through the choice of pure overall will. Man as an individual loses the status of the one who brings freedom. For this, the overall pure will of man is needed. Egalitarianism becomes a threat, as it is the next step in the democracy aiming at the messianic and totalitarian idea. The people's will is in the hands of few, who must translate it into action. The natural and rational order of the society is transformed into a conflict between an impersonal and amoral historical power. These changes are accompanied by a process of the centralization of social life, and in this manner the conflict between the forces of Virtue and Selfishness in the Jacobin ideas, described by Talmon, set ground for the Marxist ideology. Western Europe adopted political Messianism relatively late: after 1870. The French Revolution, rooted in democratic life, did not need this idea for the purpose. In this respect, Eastern and Western Europe differ. It is in Russia that the revolutionary spirit finds new soil and a different intensity and importance, combined with Pan-Slavic tendencies. Even though a radically different context is found in Russia, the model of thinking and organization remains the same. Totalitarian systems in Eastern and Western Europe are not the same, and a separate analysis is necessary here.

While Talmon approaches the issue of the two types of democracy from the historical and political perspective, Levinas bases his philosophy on the totalitarian thinking. Despite the difference in the area which the two philosophers explore, their thought converges on one idea: totalitarian thinking. Both criticize the thought based on a sole acceptable thinking structure. This concerns in fact totalitarian democracy and ideologies based on the totality, and their main causes. The interpretation of the concept of politics may be the key element

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 250.

here. While for Levinas the concept refers to the relationship with the Other, for Talmon it is a problem of democracy based in reducing political thinking to the infallible construction displacing what is different from it. Both approaches are similar because of the relationship to what is different. From the point of view of totalitarianism, both thinkers set off from the concept of totality which characterizes the twentieth-century European thought. Levinas and Talmon claim that the phenomenon took roots even earlier, when the modern paradigm of thought was created. Let us then have a closer look at Talmon and his critique.

Totalitarian democracy maintains that there is only one truth in politics. As a result, the political scene is polarized, and the representatives of the only faction are the depositories of the truth. The ideology applies the ideals of political Messianism, which bases on the conviction of the existence of a harmonious and perfect scheme of the existence of the world, towards which one should travel. Politics goes beyond this area and covers all of human existence, becoming an element which integrates the different areas of human existence. Political ideas are put into practice in order to achieve the objective of indivisible concentration of the different spheres of human life in one true philosophy, which is political rather than moral in character. This method of interpretation could be applied to Hegel's *Phenomenology of spirit*, and the "struggle for recognition". Totalitarian democracy has its roots in 18th c. rationalist conception of man. In referring to this tradition Talmon states, "a distorted idea bred on the irrational faith that the irrational elements in human nature and even *different experiments of living* are a bad accident, an unfortunate remnant, a temporary aberration, to give place - in time and under curing influences - to some uniformly rational behaviour in an integrated society"¹¹. Talmon points out that this concept of integrist authority is based on the faith in the rational while eliminating from science the historical and natural sciences aspects. An empiricist approach precludes the underlying thesis on the implementation of an esoteric goal for the totalitarian democracy. Talmon observes that in the context of a state which ensures prosperity for its citizens, earlier distinction between socialist and capitalist governments is transformed into an absolute and empirical approach to the world. Totalitarian thinking is based on an understanding of the world which is determined by the totality. Such a perception rejects difference and question of erring. Levinas on his part perceives totality, a process that is prior to totalitarianism, as the foundation of the rise of totalitarianism. Levinas makes reference to Heidegger's philosophy.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 254.

2. *Totality and totalitarianism*

Levinas perceives the beginning of the problem of totalitarianism much earlier, at the foundations of Greek philosophy. Talmon, in his analysis of the period of Enlightenment and Romanticism, points to Kant's philosophy and its continuation by Fichte. It is there that an important trend emerges in European thinking, leading to totalitarianism. In Fichte's work, *individual ego* becomes the *universal ego*. "The more intensely Fichte became aware of the mighty workings of that Ego, the more the individual Ego ceased to matter to him. It was real only in so far as it partook in the infinite Endeavour of the universal Ego, in so far as it sublimated its arbitrary self. This was the metaphysical justification of that of Fichte's political philosophy which found expression in the vision of a closed society and an autarchic near-totalitarian state; in this state the dignity of the individual was secured by having his livelihood guaranteed and his morality enforced by a *Zwingherr* who embodied objective truth and goodness"¹². Both for Talmon and for Levinas, the German idealism is a period during which the identity of what is mine is confirmed in what is mine. The individual question about myself and my identity is universal in dimension and becomes a political issue. This process makes the community exclude what is a different, other, thus giving rise to totalitarian thought, based on totality. Levinas makes a direct reference not to Fichte, but Heidegger. Reduction to totalitarian ideology in Levinas' work is not political, but cultural and philosophical in character. Both Talmon and Levinas criticize the traditional European metaphysics and call for the return to the question of the relationship between myself and the exteriority.

The main problem which Levinas faces is the return to the philosophy based on the relationship between myself and the Other. The formula of European philosophical thought based on the search for oneself in what is other calls for a new insight into what constitutes the basis of thinking. Levinas rejects the philosophy that is guided by metaphysics dating back to Plato and Aristotle, and more specifically rationalist thinking. However, his approach does not seek to eliminate it, but to go beyond its scope. For this purpose, he requires a philosophical thought which refers to the transcendent and the eschatological. European thought, subordinated to linear time, which consists in the succession of events and the question of the the basis, the *arche*, finds a new source in the relationship between myself and

¹² J. Talmon, *Romanticism and revolt Europe 1815-1848*, London 1967, p. 85.

the Other. There is no longer talk of the beginning, but of the anarchic time. The relation to the Other is asymmetrical. What is different in the philosophical tradition goes returns to what it is myself. Diversity is destroyed by the same. "For the philosophical tradition the conflicts between the same and the other are resolved by the theory whereby the other is reduced to the same - or, concretely, by the community of the State, where beneath anonymous power, though it be intelligible, the I rediscovers war in the tyrannic oppression it undergoes from the totality"¹³. Levinas criticizes the *totality* and sets philosophy on a course toward the *exteriority*, which does not destroy the identity.

3. *The relation between totality and exteriority*

The relationship between the *totality* and *exteriority* consists in my own understanding, which oscillates between what is contained in my world and what is external to it. Levinas introduces the concept of separation, which means that *me* will never become *what is other* (*not-me*), but makes the more apparent a difference which impossible to overcome. In Talomon's philosophy, this perspective means that the totality must give way to freedom based on the acceptance of diversity. For the philosopher, this dimension is socio-political in character. But we are still in the circle of what is other and what constitutes me. Levinas, on the other hand, perceives the issue in relation to Heidegger's ontology, and replaces the question of being by the ethical question on the Other. Levinas rejects the rational discourse, opting instead for the description of ethical relationships with theological concepts, while granting a new character to sensuality. In this manner, he attempts to depart from the debate on the rational and irrational descriptions of reality. Following Heidegger, he intends to reach what constitutes the essence of philosophy, which is prior to consciousness. Ethical relations do not destroy the difference, but instead intensify it, which requires going beyond yourself, beyond your own selfishness. In it, the Other is revealed to me in his poverty and his dignity. This is an asymmetrical relationship: *me* always comes too late with relation to the ethical indagation. The relationship is asymmetrical.

The Author of *Totality and Infinity* attempts to consider the question of totality, and from its perspective to move towards what is other. "In divesting the ego of its imperialism, the hetero-affection establishes a new undeclinability: the self, subjected to an absolute

¹³ E. Levinas, *Totality...*, p. 47.

accusative, as though this accusation which it does not even to assume came from it. The self involved in the gnawing away at oneself in responsibility, which is also incarnation, is not an objectification of the self by the ego. The self, the persecuted one, is accused beyond his fault before freedom, and thus in an unavowable innocence"¹⁴. The philosophy of the Other reaches for the sphere which anticipates any perception of the world through consciousness. Persecution, which concerns the its ipseity (sobość), is the original creation, which precedes thinking in terms of logos. This formulation reveals a logic which could be described as science based on the power of reason. Levinas dates the beginning of the tradition of the totalitarianism, or more precisely the total thinking, much further, situating it in the Antiquity. The Western tradition refers to epistemology, which is tantamount to the levelling of what is different. The similar discovers the similar. In this sense, what is other is subjected to the process of denaturalization. Levinas calls for a different approach, namely the recognition of diversity and difference, which cannot be dissolved in myself. In order to be able to be myself, I have to transcend myself. I return not as *I*, but as *me*. "This antecedence of responsibility to freedom would signify the Goodness of Good: the necessity that the goodness choose me first before I can be in a position to choose, that is, welcome its choice. That is my pre-originary *susceptiveness*"¹⁵. This attempt of find the identity demonstrates a diachrony between me and my being on the one hand, and goodness, on the other. "The goodness designates a subject – in his vulnerability, which he cannot control – and makes it to come closer to the other, the neighbour." The European philosophical tradition is based on being and consciousness. Levinas' intention is to demonstrate that the tradition is erring when it reduces goodness to identity. "The neighbour assigns me before I designate him. This is a modality not of a knowing, but of an obsession, a shuddering of the human quite different from cognition. Knowing is always convertible into creation and annihilation; its object lends itself to a concept, is a result. Through the suppression of the singular, though generalization, knowing is idealism. In an approach I am first a servant of a neighbour, already late and guilty for being late"¹⁶.

The reflection adopts as its starting point the *Phenomenology of spirit*, and more specifically, the universal identity. The interpretation of Hegel's philosophy can constitute a turning point in the comparative analysis of totalitarianism in Talmon's and Levinas' work. Even though Levinas moves from the totalitarianism to the total thinking, the two

¹⁴ E. Levinas, *Otherwise than being or beyond essence*, Pittsburgh 1998, p. 120.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

philosophers share their attitude to what is different. The author of *Totality and Infinity* shapes a relationship of identification between the *same* and *I* basing primarily on the sojourning of *I* in the world, and secondarily on the relationship between *I* and *Another*. "The Way of the *I* against the *other* of the world consists in *sojourning*, in *Identifying oneself* Existing order here *at home with oneself* (chez soi). In a world which is from the first other the *I* is nonetheless autochthonous. It is the very reversion of this alteration. It finds in the world a site (lieu) and a home (maison)"¹⁷. This world, which is called my home, is my exteriority, granting me sovereignty or dependence. The relationship of *I* with another world is purely formal, an is triggered in me by the struggle for power, the imperialism.

The relation of *I* with *the Other* is tantamount to my lack of power over what is other. My consciousness and the willingness to transform otherness into an organized series of elements which build my world is my imperialism, which is disturbed by the Other and his freedom, which makes my at home with oneself waver. "A relation whose terms do not form a totality can hence be produced within the general economy of being only as proceeding from the *I* to the other, as a *face to face*, as delineating a distance in depth-that of conversation, of goodness, of Desire – irreducible to the distance the synthetic activity of the understanding establishes between the diverse terms, other with respect to one another, that lend themselves to its synoptic operation"¹⁸. Levinas distinguishes the relationships between me and another from thinking based on the logic of needs. It is only thinking that contains in it the logic of desire that characterizes the attitude of *I* to the Other. The mind combines elements to eliminate the difference, but Levinas' thought strives to break the totality through the epiphany of the face of the Other. The mind combines by removing the difference; Levinas, however, is concerned about breaking totality through the epiphany of the face of the Other. The system is concerned not with history, but with eschatology. Rational categories give way to the ethical obsession with the Other. "Rather than constituting a total with this other as with an object, *thought consists in speaking*. We propose to call *religion* the bond that is established between the same and the other without constituting a totality"¹⁹.

Talmon diagnoses a separation between totalitarian democracy and liberal democracy, with the first option based on the conviction of the necessity to implement truth, and the other – freedom. In Levinas' case, the path leads from truth and freedom to responsibility. Talmon opts for freedom and the acceptance of diversity, for the trial and error method, rejecting the

¹⁷ E. Levinas, *Totality...*, p. 37.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

building of a system on the basis of truth. Levinas founds his critique on thinking based on *totality*, and Talmon on that of *totalitarian democracy*. However, both systems analyze the human relationships that reach out to what is different and share their relationship with Hegel and his *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The critique is based on totality and otherness, which coincides with what is other to become one. Diversity is eroded in contact with a mind of total tendencies.

Levinas inclines towards the idea the infinity and responsibility. The interpretation of these concepts must, however, be anticipated by the sphere which is founded on ethics and ontology. There is, however, a difference in the bases of the two systems. While Levinas refers to Heidegger's ontology, Talmon speaks of the tradition of Enlightenment (the French Revolution) and the philosophy of Hegel and Marx. Talmon's critique of socialism refers to the German philosophy from Kant through to Marx. Within thinking based in democracy, there is on the one hand liberal democracy, and, on the other, totalitarian democracy, the latter being either left-wing or right-wing in character. Talmon argues that German socialism stems from two trends. The first of those is a theoretical critique based on an interpretation of the early Hegel, or pure socialism. This dialectic is based on the relation between the theoretical and the practical. The *Phenomenology of Spirit* points to the transformation of the subjective and objective spirit into the absolute spirit. The central question is the nature and spirit, which combine with each another as being and thinking. The second trend is the philosophy of Marx and Engels, which was built on idealism and utopia. The main event which affected the thinking of the young Marx was the messianic revolution of 1848. Marx was sceptical concerning the results of the French Revolution, and he was awaiting its completion. These two currents have a decisive influence on the totalitarian left-wing thought. Talmon criticizes first of all the theory of ideas, which is based in the philosophy of the collective, taking up a which refers to the society and the nation during the Enlightenment and Romanticism. "Knowledge and action, intellectual pursuits and ethical progress stemmed from the same impulse and aimed at the same Messianic goal. This was not of course a task for an individual Ego, but for the universal Ego - for mankind across time and space"²⁰.

Talmon, referring to Hegel and the consequences of his thinking, arrives a truth which resides in the compatibility between the thing and the intellect. Hegel builds a system by rejecting the concept, and historical truth is realized in history itself. There is no question of a world of eternal ideas and the history of man, but of the truth of history. Hegel's philosophy is

²⁰ J. L. Talmon, *Romanticism...*, p. 85.

based on the juxtaposition of nature and spirit, of coercion and freedom. It refers to *society*, *corporation*, which is defined as a *Free private pursuits* Hegel presents the state in opposition to *societas*, where the state embodies the spirit of the world. Levinas also refers to Hegel, but at a time directly to Heidegger and his concept of truth as unconcealment, his critique situated on the grounds of ontology and ethics. Contemporary philosophy is a philosophy of strength. Levinas posits at this point a very different model for philosophy: instead of a secularized world, he proposes eschatology; instead of ontology, metaphysics and ethics. His thinking, however, does not create a system, but gets out of it. For him, eliminating God from reflection is tantamount to the destruction of thought. Otherness is not manifested in Levinas' philosophy in the community, but in the ethical relationship.

This ethics however, is not based on the determination of free will through the moral imperative as in the case of Kant, neither it is based on values, but it rests on goodness, and on recognizing the Other. To present the source and find the appropriate language for ethics, he uses the language of psychology (the notion of being obsessed with the Other), despite the fact that it affords a different sense and meaning. He also uses religious experience. Within religion, the Other gains a more radical meaning, i.e. becomes the perfect Other. Therefore he reaches for the notion of eschatology.

4. *Eschatological and political aspects of exteriority*

The relation to the other also has an eschatological dimension. The act of choice and invitation to the transcendental relationship does not refer only to a man and his neighbour, but also bears the characteristics of relationship which exceeds any exteriority. The relation does not refer exclusively to the man-to-man, but also the man-to-God relationship. The eschatological nature of the relationship is not tantamount to a reference to the messianic ideology, but an act of being chosen. Of great significance is the observation that this relation precedes all discovery and interpretation of the world based on totality. Talmon perceives as dangerous the combination of the Messianism with the rational thought of the Enlightenment, rejecting ethics from the sphere of the religious things and instilling it in the soil of the civil society. This led to divisions in the French Revolution and the elimination of diversity thorough terror and force. Levinas refers to Rosenzweig's face epiphany. Political Messianism, which Talmon mentions, is directed at engagement, but also on being chosen. The embodiment of the objective toward which the nation moves has connotations that go beyond me and ethical relationship. Messianism in its Romantic version identifies with the

conviction of the uniqueness and special predestination of an individual or nation. In Levinas' work the problem of eschatology does not aspire to a political dimension, but reaching the bases. The obsession with the other means abandoning one's identity and moving towards the one who precedes me in the ethical vocation. This call is a voice of helplessness and dedication, the speech of a widow, an orphan, a foreigner. Levinas abandons the language of philosophical discourse based on rationalism, and Talmon also criticizes the tradition of the Enlightenment with its rationalism, which is sometimes transformed into terror and the elimination of what is different from me. Talmon describes this phenomenon from the political and social perspective, referring to the Great French Revolution and the Romantic ideology of the following period, then making reference to philosophy based on building a system, a totality: particularly Hegel and his phenomenology of spirit. For Levinas, abandoning the totality is tantamount to the abandoning thinking based on consciousness and the desire to dominate the Other. This is realised through a transcendent relationship with the Other. However, I must go beyond myself. Levinas rejects not only rationalism, but also irrational thinking. What is important for him is a thinking based on a new basis. For this purpose, it is necessary to eliminate the struggle for recognition from philosophy. Levinas claims that it is not freedom that should constitute the basis for thinking in the face of the Other, but responsibility, however responsibility affords a new meaning. Responsibility is not affiliated with somebody, but is a primary attempt to respond to the epiphany of the face. Levinas uses the language of epiphany and expression, because he does not want the other man to be reduced to the mere object of research. He somehow relates here to Heidegger and his hermeneutics, whose aim consisted in overcoming the relation of man to the object of research and presenting him in a foremost experience. Man cannot be perceived on the basis of practical and theoretical reason (enlightenment thought), but on the grounds of the original experience. Levinas sees this in a meeting with the other man, for whom I am responsible. I take up this responsibility towards the Other, because he is here, in front of me, awaiting my response. Responsibility in the meaning of *respondere*, or answering becomes the source here.

5. *Responsibility in relation to the Other*

Studies on exteriority lead to a shift of focus in philosophy from freedom to responsibility, perceived, however, not as the responsibility for decisions, but in fact outside my freedom. Levinas points to the fact that the transcendent relationship with the Other does not apply to

what is external in the popular sense, but to the exteriority which I cannot grasp and make it become part of my identity. The author of *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence* rejects the otherness which led to questions about the essence of being, to present it in a different light. Greek philosophy asked about the *arche*, the beginning, the first element of the world. On its basis a philosophical tradition identifying itself with rationalism was formed. For Levinas what is important has no beginning, but it is anarchic. The ethical relation has no beginning and sequential-based logic. "The responsibility for the other cannot have begun in my commitment, in my decision. The unlimited responsibility in which I find myself comes from the hither side of my freedom, from a *prior to very memory*, an *ulterior to every accomplishment*, from the non-present par excellence, the non-original, the an-archic, prior to or beyond essence"²¹. The tradition of German idealism, which Levinas detects in the Heideggerian question of being, must give way to an ethical and eschatological reflection.

The concept of responsibility is closely linked with the freedom of a man as an individual. For centuries, responsibility has had an ethical significance. But before it gained the contemporary sense, it referred to the law. The author of *Totality and Infinity* points to the phenomenon of responsibility as more fundamental than that of freedom. Freedom, which is a key concept, loses primordial importance in Levinas' work. However, it is not depreciated, but, in accordance with the philosophical reflection looking for the basis of what is first, it expects movement towards the source where everything begins. The *arche* recognized so far gives priority to what is precedes it and, therefore, anticipates my consciousness and my sense of my identity. Here, a broadening gap opens between Talmon's and Levinas' thought. Talmon understands responsibility in relation to freedom, and more precisely, to liberal democracy. For him, exteriority appears on the social level, in social relationships and the acceptance of minorities. Levinas, on the other hand, does not reject the transcendent relationship, but instead points out the impossibility of maintaining a relation with the Other on the basis of one's own freedom. Between Talmon's and Levinas' approach, is situated Tischner's philosophy, which combines the problem of freedom and democratic thought with responsibility as a transcendent relationship with the Other. Tischner perceives in freedom a much deeper aspect than mere consciousness, which must be based on an anarchic relationship with the Other. At the level of consciousness, Tischner considers the process of reaching freedom, however, looking for it in the sphere which anticipates it, i.e. an ethical indagation by the Other. Liberal democracy is based on symmetrical relationships between what is different and what belongs to us, but an anticipating relationship is asymmetrical.

²¹ E. Levinas, *Otherwise...*, p. 10.

Both Talmon's and Levinas' approaches address the problem of thinking, but do so from the perspective of human drama in twentieth-century history. They did not analyze freedom and responsibilities in relation to ethics, as independent from the senses²², but as a process of detachment from building a system and a thinking based on totality.

When Levinas states that responsibility anticipates freedom, he creates a new dimension of responsibility, which is an appeal and an instruction. The call comes from afar, i.e. from the Other. In the appeal of speech, it is not the content that is important, but the one appealing, who is transcendent. The content refers us to what we express earlier as what we preliminarily understand. The understanding of the content requires a that it be previously understood to some extent, somehow. As a result, this means that if we were to make it the object of our concern, we would violate the transcendence of the other, we would rob it of *kat allo* (I am with/for the other, in the opposite to *kat auto* (I am for myself). Face speech does not neutralize otherness. Through it, the Same and the Other meet despite the gulf that divides them. "One can, to be sure, conceive of language as an act, as a gesture of behaviour. But then one omits the essential of language: the coinciding of the revealer and the revealed in the face, which is accomplished in being situated in height with respect to us - in teaching"²³. In face speech, the Other expresses himself, but not by passing judgement for something that is the thematisation of the content, but by appealing to me. The face of the Other is first of all not a speech about something, but speech in the presence of someone. Through speech, the one who is the Same does not lose his identity, does not become the Other, the foreign, but instead thanks to the separation enters an of asymmetric relationship with the other, who refuses to be owned by the consciousness grasping in a totality. Levinas rejects the truth that emerges from reflection on the compliance of the thing and the intellect, and the Heideggerian truth as *uncovering*. In his critique of the Enlightenment tradition of thinking, Talmon also detects truth as totality. He advocates reaching for what gives the human community the possibility to fulfil the needs of the individual and those of the community without eliminating diversity and difference. For centuries, philosophical tradition was based on the question of truth, and was transformed into fanaticism and the implementation in reality of the total world, and consequently of totalitarianism.

²² The Platonic problem, very present in the Middle Ages, is absent in their philosophies.

²³ E. Levinas, *Totalite...*, p. 67

6. Responsibility and freedom.

Responsibility precedes freedom and sovereignty - Levinas states. The philosophy of German idealism insists on finding in oneself what is other, but as a result of the process, what is other becomes me. The process of neutralization is linked to my search for identity in the world and is accompanied by consciousness. Heidegger rejects consciousness as the subject of philosophy, proposing instead an in-depth analysis by posing questions on the basis, on being. Levinas takes over Heidegger's rejection of the subject-object relationship, and within it, the consciousness, however, aims beyond being. For Levinas, responsibility means *exasperated contracting* leading to the substitution for the Other. "Responsibility for another is not an accident that happens to a subject, but precedes essence in it, has not awaited freedom, in which a commitment to another would have been made. I have not done anything and I have always been under accusation - persecuted. The ipseity, in the passivity without *arche* characteristic of identity, is a hostage. The word/means *here I am*, answering for everything and for everyone. Responsibility for the others has not been a return to oneself, but an exasperated contracting, which the limits of identity cannot retain. Which the limits of identity can not retain. Recurrence becomes identity in breaking up the limits of identity, breaking up the principle of being in me, the intolerance rest in itself characteristic of definition"²⁴ . . . Once I am called to a relation with the Other I no longer have to look for my identity and I do not have to confirm it. However, I am irreplaceable in responsibility. This fact marks the departure from the philosophy of Heidegger and Hegel, an analysis which is saturated by the confirmation of the same.

Freedom may be the bond linking the truth as the search for identity and responsibility. However, Levinas' and Talmon's stance on the question differs. While Levinas moves from freedom to responsibility, Talmon – from truth of freedom. Otherness leads Talmon to accept freedom as a measure. He observes the process of demoralization in history, which applies evil means to achieve truth. During the French Revolution, the community takes over the function of religion, which guards moral values. This process eventually leads to the polarization of the society and the struggle for primacy and being of the bearer of the

²⁴ E. Levinas, *Otherwise...*, p. 114

eternal truth. Ethics becomes a social force, which leads to aberrations and abuse. „The philosophical line of attack on the Church was that apart from the historic untruth of the revealed religion, it also stood condemned as a sociological force. It introduced imaginary and heterogeneous criteria into the life of man and society. The contradiction was harmful to both, and altogether demoralizing”²⁵. Freedom and equality can lead to terror and the struggle for power. The concept of goodness becomes important here.

Equality, which is a part of the trademark message of the French Revolution, is rejected in the process of the re-evaluation of goodness and truth. It is replaced by equality, but only for those who profess the same values and work for the same goal. For Levinas, goodness does not arise in the context of power, but of transcendence and pluralism. "Transcendence or goodness is produced as pluralism. The pluralism of being is not produced as a multiplicity of a constellation spread out before a possible gaze, for thus it would be ready totalized, joined into a entity. Pluralism is accomplished in goodness proceeding from me to the other, in which first the other, as absolutely other, can be produced, without an alleged lateral view upon this movement having any right to grasp of it a truth superior to what which is produced in goodness itself”²⁶. The mention of pluralism makes us consider more fundamental questions about the goodness and the necessity of transcending beyond oneself. Goodness occurs in speech, which combines the separated planes of what is interior and exterior. Responsibility means being towards the other without destroying him as the Other. Speech is the solution of the problem of totality and totalitarianism, which traverse the space of what is mine without destroying the absolute otherness. The Other is not perceived through the thematic content, but as an ethical call, which appeals and moves, thus taking us out of rest, out of *our home* (Behausung). Ethics is not understood here as the domain of one party, which acts as the guardian of truth, but as the responsibility for the Other. The separation of ethics from religion, which Talmon notes, is already absent in the philosophy of Levinas. It is replaced by another bond linking religion and ethics, contained in the very concept of the term *religio*, i.e. the bond which unites me with the Other. Let us return to Levinas' work *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*. The following excerpt describes the grounds for Talmon and Levinas' debate with the rationalist tradition in European philosophy, which led to total war. Levinas proposes a relationship which is infinite, with neither beginning nor end. In it, a trace of the infinite is contained, calling for substitution. “One does

²⁵ J. L. Talmon, *The origins...*, p. 23, Voltaire, like the atheists, criticizes religious ethics. Rousseau, on the other hand, points out the principles which surpass a certain social plane.

²⁶ E. Levinas, *Totality...*, s. 305f.

not enter into this pluralist society without always remaining outside by speech (in which goodness is produced) - but one does not leave it in order to simply see oneself inside. The unity of plurality is peace, and not the conference of the elements that constitute plurality. Peace therefore cannot be identified with the end of combats that cease for want of combatants, by the defeat of some and the victory of the others, that is, with cemeteries or future universal empires. Peace must be my peace, in a relation that starts from an I and goes to the other, in desire and goodness, where the I both maintains itself and exists without egoism”²⁷

Summary

The principal problem referring to totalitarian thinking and totality presented in the introduction is understanding the Other, who influences relations between people on ethical, social as well as international politics levels. Sensitivity to the rights of man and protection of basic human values are merely expressions of ethical truth within respect for man. Contemporary politics is involved in a problem that bears two natures: political and ethical and does not respect their diversity. The bonding of these two orders make the authority more authoritative. Totalitarianism is rooted in ideas rejecting diversity. The example of Levinas and Talmon points to the source of contemporary thinking leading to the rejection of the Other. Talmon notices the threat resulting from the two tendencies in contemporary thinking that may lead to the elimination of the Other. Even the French Revolution, having introduced the air of freedom and fraternity, in the end becomes a mechanism rejecting its fellow-brothers. Renouncing present values has not eradicated violence. Criticism of rationalism leading to pragmatism as well as the new form of Messianism, become for Talmon a serious issue within the contemporary culture. It is hard to disagree with Talmon after seeing the dangers resulting from the new forms of Messianism such as contemporary Pan-Slavism and Novorossia. And, on the other hand, we face the fall of rational thinking. Talmon as well as Levinas do not present the collapse of culture related to the social and political ideas, but they attempt to demonstrate the dangers it poses. After having been led to fall, European culture of the 20th century needed to develop a new structure. Levinas advises reflecting on metaphysics and ontological tradition. The Other, who has hitherto been a social and political problem, is now in the centre of attention. He rejects Hegel's dialectics and proposes responsibility, which

²⁷ Ibid., p. 306.

pre-empts the freedom of man. The epiphany of the face of the Other makes me renounce the will to overpower him, and wish to entrust and substitute. The experience of the Other and the critique of the ontological thinking lead Levinas to the analysis of the responsibility in relation to the Other. Totalitarian democracy is based on thinking in terms of totality, a way of understanding the world which gives rise to totalitarianism. These two concepts lead to the conclusion that Levinas and Talmon find the sources of totalitarianism in the elimination of otherness and thinking based on totality. Talmon formulates a diagnosis on the clash of totalitarian and liberal democracy. For him, historical truth is crucial, while for Levinas it is ethical responsibility. According to Levinas responsibility towards the Other has an ethical perspective and is based on the principle of substitution, being with and for the Other. It is not about our previous cautions, i.e. about the confusion of social and ethical order, expecting substitution in the meaning specified by Levinas within the meeting of man with man, but about indicating that all the international and political relations are based on cultural and ethical grounds, although they have a different purpose, i.e. to keep international peace. The example of Jakob Leib Talmon and Emmanuel Levinas should point to the political problem viewed in the perspective of ethics and religion. The overcoming of totalitarianism in the 20th century was based on renouncing violence. A great influence was exerted by the philosophy of dialogue, also mentioned by Józef Tischner, in the time of solidarity movement formation. It should make us realize the need for tolerance, which has a strong cultural basis. In the contemporary socio-political circumstances, as well as in the domain of international relations it becomes indispensable to rethink the entire picture excluding differences with totalitarianism. Because indeed, the threat of totalitarian authority in one nation becomes a threat to the nations around it.

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Regional Integration in the Asia-Pacific: Is there Anything Left from Asia-Pacific Community Proposal?

ABSTRACT

This article discusses Australian PM's, Kevin Rudd's proposal of creating an Asia Pacific Community presented in 2008 and currently perceived as a failure. It presents theoretical basis for the integration within the Pacific Basin (including integrative potential of the region and gravity theory of trade) and the role of the Pacific Ocean as a certain stage for this organization. Four pillars of economic community (trade and investment, infrastructure, financial and monetary cooperation, regional public goods) integration are also presented, as economic community seem to be the only possible that could bring additional value to regional integration. Finally, it analyses problem of conditions for the new institution, including problems of existing organizations of the region. There are two conclusions: (1) despite the failure of Rudd's proposal under Asia-Pacific Community name, ASEAN+8 (or enlarged in November 2011 East Asian Summit) is somehow corresponding with one of the options for APC; (2) non-creation of a new institution is definitely better for regional architecture and integration *per se*, as allows existing institution to employ their potential and brings us closer to integrated region. Therefore, development of the East Asia Summit (EAS18), as one of the regional institutions may be perceived as kind of heritage of this interesting Australian PM's idea.

KEY WORDS: Asia-Pacific, regional integration, regional architecture, APEC, ASEAN, EAS, Asia-Pacific Community

Regional Integration in the Asia-Pacific: Is there Anything Left from Asia-Pacific Community Proposal?²⁸

Six years after the official launch of Kevin Rudd's proposal of the Asia-Pacific Community (APC) most scholars and politicians share an opinion the project failed. If we look at the issue more carefully, we can directly refer to one of the versions of the proposal, assuming enlargement of the East Asia Summit (at that time ASEAN+6) by Russia and the United States, hence avoiding marginalization of ASEAN. This idea was implemented, when Russia and the U.S. joined the East Asia Summit in November 2011. Hence, in terms of membership, we could think about fulfilling the assumptions of what was proposed by Kevin Rudd. If we look at other dimensions, however, it's hard to say, the idea was implemented.

When first put forward in the then Australian Prime Ministers' address to the Asia Society in June 2008, project initiated wide discussion, both in media, and among scholars of the Asia Pacific region. Particular concerns were connected with the fear of Rudd's will of importing European Union idea into the Pacific Basin. We could also notice a number of worries linked with the existing regional institutions, especially the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), as well as the ASEAN's derivatives, the ASEAN Plus Three (APT), the East Asian Summit (EAS) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).

As for APEC, there was a risk the organization would be replaced by this new structure (it makes much more sense than keeping both of them, unless we just want some additional institutional chaos in the region). Even if APEC's goals are still far from accomplishment, one must appreciate its input into the regional integration of the Pacific Rim. Moreover, one could presume, the new structure could be built, especially in the institutional aspect, the same way APEC was 20 years ago, but with less enthusiasm and more realistic approach (therefore its goals may be not so far-reaching). Hence, there is no evidence the APC would be better solution than APEC and it would probably just result in postponing the process or even could lead to a regress of the Pacific Rim institutional integration.

²⁸ This paper is extended and slightly modified (in certain sections) version of an article: M. Grabowski, "The Asia-Pacific Community: Conditions, Feasibility and the Role of the U.S.", *Ad Americam, Journal of American Studies*, vol. 11, 2010.

As for ASEAN, crucial institution, especially since ASEAN Charter of 2008 and ASEAN Community goal set for 2015, putting Rudd's proposal into effect, especially having in mind the initial approach, could result in marginalization of this organization and internal divisions within ASEAN due to the different position of Indonesia that was given certain place in the new structure. One could define it as harmful for the integration in East Asia and almost unacceptable for ASEAN member states, being currently the leaders of the East Asian integration (at least from the formal point of view, having the 'driver's seat' in East Asian regional organizations). Furthermore, lack of a weak (*sic!*) leader (as ASEAN is for sure the weak leader of the East Asian integration) could eventually even freeze the East Asian Summit development, because of tensions among powers participating in EAS. Moreover, I would perceive East Asian integration, based on ASEAN, favorable for U.S. interests, as it prevents any of regional powers from obtaining a formal leader's position in the region (the most dangerous one for the U.S. would be the economic and political leadership of the People's Republic of China).

The paper aims at analyzing conditions for high quality economic integration of the region on the basis of theoretical assumptions, presented in the first section. In conclusion, it suggests moving some tasks, especially tasks connected with security (including humanitarian security) from APEC to ARF, and focusing APEC on the economic issues. This is first and foremost due to the lack of capabilities of APEC to deal with broadening agenda. One should consider strengthening both APEC, and EAS by giving it limited supranational features. The latter would definitely require, at this stage, excluding all the strategic issues from the scope of the new/reformed institution. One should naturally have in mind strong resistance, making this project hardly feasible (even looking at ASEAN developments).

THEORETICAL BASIS

Analyzing the problem of Asia-Pacific Community creation, I'd call four theories, starting with Joseph's Ney concept of the integrative potential. He mentioned four conditions, favoring integration:

- 1) Symmetry or economic equality of units – it's especially important in regional integration, although if there are core areas for integration, its role may diminish;

- 2) Complementarity of the elite value – Nye stressed that the higher the level of complementarity, the bigger chance, the regional grouping will keep its impetus;
- 3) Existence of pluralism – thanks to the pluralism the number of groups benefiting from integration increases, hence they do care about keeping the pace of the integration as well as enlarge it to new areas;
- 4) Capacity of member states to adapt and respond – in this respect the internal stability is treated as a crucial factor (the better the authorities manage internal problems, the bigger chance they'll be able to participate effectively in an integrative organization).²⁹

Looking briefly at the abovementioned four factors, we may definitely question three of them in case of the Asia-Pacific region. There is no symmetry or economic equality of units, but we may see integration in the region as a way of looking for core areas. Problems with internal stability and complementarity of values among participating units are also clearly visible. The most important factor for Asia-Pacific integration is, in my opinion, in plurality of units participating in the process. This factor is particularly visible in the U.S. where position of the federal government is strongly limited by different lobbies. The primary force of the Pacific Rim integration is businessmen and consumers and we can for sure call it market driven integration. It's even more visible in case of East Asia, where manufacturing networks are crucial factors of economic cooperation. I would also stress other factors, including especially the role of an academic community, as well as people-to-people exchanges (migrations, education, religious connections etc.).³⁰

Another theory I find useful in this case is the one presented by Karl Deutsch as a set of conditions for creation of amalgamated security community (I enlarge it and treat as a good starting point for integration in other than trade spheres). He identified the following conditions:

- 1) mutual compatibility of major values;
- 2) a distinctive way of life;
- 3) expectations of joint rewards (they should come before burdens);

²⁹ See J. Nye, *Peace in Parts: Integration and Conflict in Regional Organization*, Little, Brown, Boston 1971, in J. Dougherty, R. Pfaltzgraff, J. Dougherty, R. Pfaltzgraff, *Contending Theories of International Relations: A Comprehensive Survey*, New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1990., pp. 444-445.

³⁰ While dealing with problems of regional integration, it's useful to quote J. Nye's definition of a region, where region is defined as a group of states connected both by geographical links, and a certain degree of mutual interdependence. See J. Nye, *International Regionalism*, Boston: Little Brown, 1968, p. vii.

- 4) a market increase (in political and administrative capabilities);
- 5) superior economic growth (at least in the core areas, weaker areas are grouped around them);
- 6) unbroken links of social communication (geographically and between social strata);
- 7) a broadening of the political elite;
- 8) mobility of persons (at least among the politically relevant strata);
- 9) a multiplicity of communications and transactions.³¹

Again, looking at the aforementioned nine conditions we can have serious doubts, whether it's possible to create such a community within the Pacific Basin. On the other hand, the integration process in the Asia-Pacific region in general, and in case of creation of the Asia-Pacific Community in particular should aim at meeting these criteria, as it could help us creating real community. Institutional structure can be supportive in this case, but other factors, especially national states and transnational links seem to be crucial in this respect.

It's also worth calling the concept of Louis Cantori and Steven Spiegel, who accurately defined a regional subsystem (we may think if we should think of Pacific Basin or East Asia), as a group of nearby and cooperating states, connected to each other by ethnical, lingual, culture, social and historical links, whose sense of identity may be additionally strengthen by activities of subjects external to this system.³² This theory further supports creation of an organization limited to East Asia, although a skillful American policy can change the situation. The only problem is a lack of political will to accept costs of such policy.

Finally, comparing the integrative potential of East Asia and the Pacific we may use the gravity model of trade, as economic integration seems to be crucial in regional integration. We can use this model not only for assessing the potential of integration in the area of trade, but also in different areas. The crucial variables for this model are GDP and distance between given countries. The basic form of the gravity model may be presented as:

—————, where ——— is a value of trade (exports and imports) between countries x and y, c – constant, GDP_x and GDP_y – income of the exporting and importing countries, D_{xy} –

³¹ See K. Deutsch *et al.*, *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957, in J. Dougherty, R. Pfaltzgraff, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

³² See L. Cantori, S. Spiegel, *The international Politics of Regions: A Comparative Approach*, Engelwood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1970, pp. 7-20, 607.

distance between countries x and y , and finally β_1 , β_2 and f are parameters of the gravity equation estimating in research process.³³

Having in mind the abovementioned theories, particularly the last two, we may see that integration within the Pacific Basin is relatively difficult. Existence of APEC and successful integration efforts of regional actors is a kind of denial of classic integration theories, and integration in the region must proceed quite slowly. Even though, in pursuing the concept of the Asia-Pacific Community, we should start on working on basic conditions, including building socio-cultural community that will bring us benefits in *ca.* one-two generations. We should also notice that integration within East Asia is more likely than integration within the Pacific Basin, what is visible in the RCEP (Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership) project, initiated in 2013 among 16 EAS countries (excluding the U.S. and Russia)³⁴. Integration within the broader East Asia Summit (EAS18) is definitely more difficult.

PACIFIC BASIN – A CORE FOR THE COMMUNITY?

Due to specifics of the Pacific region, it's quite difficult to characterize its scope. We could focus on geographical criteria, but also institutional or geopolitical (or even geo-economical). Having in mind especially a role of India as well as Latin American Pacific states, I would rather focus on the institutional and geopolitical factors defining Pacific for the sake of a new institutional structure.³⁵ In this context ASEAN+8 as an Asia-Pacific Community seems more logical, hence more feasible.

In a skeptical view (having in mind a creation of the Asia-Pacific Community), we should also take into consideration the following factors:

³³ Formula quoted from Dongwook Han, *Gravity Model and Economic Integration*, A dissertation submitted to Michigan State University in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of doctor of philosophy, Department of Economics 1999, ss. 32-33, available at the dissertation database of the George Washington University. We must bear in mind that the pure economic variables are not only factors influencing trade, especially looking at the U.S. trade relations. See R. Summary, "A Political-Economic Model of U.S. Bilateral Trade," *The Review of Economics and Statistics*, vol. 71, no. 1, Feb. 1989.

³⁴ Negotiations are to be concluded through 2015, but the target seems remote. More information about the project in the analysis: Y. Fukunaga, I. Isono, "Taking ASEAN+1 FTAs towards the RCEP: A Mapping Study," *ERIA Discussion Paper Series*, Jan. 2013, available at: www.eria.org/eria-dp-2013-02.pdf (last accessed: 02.04.2014).

³⁵ India, especially having in mind its 'Look East Policy' is a very important regional player, even not being situated on Pacific coast, Latin American Pacific countries, on the other hand, are much less engaged in regional integration processes (even though three of them: Mexico, Peru, Chile are members of APEC).

- 1) a concept of Pacific (Pacific Rim, Pacific Basin) appeared in the 1970s, to a large degree due to American scholars, in order to connect East Asian countries and the U.S., Canada, Australia and New Zealand – thanks to this concept the aforementioned four countries can be treated as an inseparable part of the region;
- 2) Asia-Pacific Region is a symbiosis of two concepts: Asia and Pacific, characterized by different historical traditions, cultures, levels of development, *etc.* and scholars are searching for common features that could be a basis for emerging common interests and a membership in the Pacific Community; as a selection of that features is a crucial determinant of the region, decision which factor is selected seems to be critical for certain states to be included in or excluded from the Asia-Pacific Region;
- 3) finally, we may think of the region in geo-economic categories – relating to the fact that economic links between the sub-regions (especially North America – particularly the United States and Canada, Oceania – predominantly Australia and New Zealand, and East Asia³⁶) result in creation of the regional system.³⁷

An additional problem, we may notice, while looking at the Asia-Pacific Region is its perception as a kind of a 'phantom region', bearing in mind its cultural differentiation, different political systems, as well as geographical structure (furthermore – regionalism, especially in East Asia, may be perceived as administrating the regional space and keeping Asian political culture basing on the sovereignty of states).³⁸ Having in its heart a vast ocean and the crucial states on its peripheries seem to be vital for the creation of the core for the integration of the peripheral states. Hence, we don't have a situation similar to the European integration (with a French-German core) or North American integration (with the U.S. as a

³⁶ While looking at Latin American states, we may notice that most of the countries are very loosely integrated to the Asia-Pacific system. Some differences are visible in case of Mexico, although the internal conflicts make it more difficult. See J. Faust, U. Franke, "Attempts at Diversification: Mexico and Pacific Asia," *The Pacific Review*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2002, M. Solis, S. Katada, "The Japan-Mexico FTA: A Cross-Regional Step in the Path towards Asian Regionalism," *Pacific Affairs*, vol. 80, no. 2, 2007. To observe the basic attempts of creation an inter-regional institution for East Asian – Latin American cooperation see L. Low, *The Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation (FEALC): Embryonic Interregionalism*, in M. Farrel, B. Hettne, L. van Langenhove (eds.), *Global Politics of Regionalism: Theory and Practice*, London: Pluto Press, 2005, pp. 85-93. We should also take into consideration the Pacific Islands Forum (cooperating within the SPARTECA Agreement) states from Southern Pacific (Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu), but, again, their participation (apart from Australia, the New Zealand and the PNG) in Asia-Pacific integration efforts seems to be rather negligible. More about their integration activities see G. Hassal, Th. Sampson, *Toward a New Pacific Regionalism*, An Asian Development Bank, Commonwealth Secretariat, Joint Report to the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Manila 2005.

³⁷ See E. Halizak, *Stosunki międzynarodowe w regionie Azji i Pacyfiku*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe SCHOLAR, 1999, pp. 53-54.

³⁸ See J. Hoon, "Regionalism in the Asia Pacific: Is Geography a Destiny?," *Area*, vol. 33, no. 3, 2001.

core). From the economic point of view we could imagine Japan as a core of the integration (or Northeast Asian countries – China, Japan, South Korea, Taiwan), but due to political and historical obstacles it's hard to imagine those countries – especially China and Japan as a core of the Asia-Pacific integration. On the other hand – the United States may be rather perceived as a core for the Western Hemisphere integration, hence we do lack the credible leader.³⁹

We should also notice that crucial East Asian states and the U.S. – the crucial Eastern Pacific actor have different geopolitical visions as a grounds of their international thinking. Looking at the U.S. we may say, it adhered to the A. Mahan's theory expressed in *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, what resulted in building a powerful fleet followed by ruling seas and oceans.⁴⁰ If we look at countries from the other side of the Pacific (especially Russia and China), we must observe that Halford Mackinder's doctrine of the heartland (focusing on the so called Island of the World: Eurasia and Africa – this region was crucial for ruling the world) was the primary source of their strategic thinking.⁴¹

Hence, we've got only one country who can serve as a primary integrative factor of the Asia-Pacific region, and this country is the United States⁴². In case the U.S. is interested in the integrative efforts, we, despite of the obstacles mentioned above, may count on the success, otherwise the prospects for successful integration of the Pacific Rim is very doubtful.⁴³

In 1997 Kishore Mahbubani noticed (as Kevin Rudd in his speech did last year) that in the global scale, we may observe the gradual westward shift of the gravity center – from

³⁹ See R. Feinberg, *Comparing Regional Integration in Non-Identical Twins: APEC and the FTAA*, Paper presented at the APEC Study Center Consortium Annual Meeting, Brunei, May 26-28, 2000.

⁴⁰ The work was first published in 1890. See A. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660-1783*, New York: Dover Publications, 1987. In his next work, *The Interest of America in Sea Power* (1897) he noticed that the U.S. and England's situations are similar, hence building and keeping the proper position of the country is only possible on the basis of a strong fleet and he influenced Theodore Roosevelt really soundly.

⁴¹ The doctrine was published in an article: "The Geographical Pivot of History," *Geographical Journal*, 1904. See also D. Deudney, *Geopolitics and Change*, in M. Doyle, J. Ikenberry, *New Thinking in International Relations Theory*, Boulder-Oxford: Westview Press, 1997, pp. 91-118. The influence of geopolitics on the U.S. Administration (comparison between Bill Clinton and George W. Bush) are described in H. Sicherman, "The Revival of Geopolitics," *The Intercollegiate Review*, Foreign Policy Research Institute, Spring 2002. It's also Zbigniew Brzezinski, who perceives Eurasia as a grand chessboard, where the struggle for global domination takes place, see Z. Brzeziński, *The Grand Chessboard: American Primacy and Its Geostrategic Imperatives*, New York: Basic Books, 1997.

⁴² This is broadly analyzed in the monograph: M. Grabowski, *Wiek Pacyfiku: Polityka Stanów Zjednoczonych wobec regionu Azji i Pacyfiku po roku 1989*, Krakow: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2012.

⁴³ We may notice, however, that having two basic poles of the system (the U.S. and China – Russia and Japan are too weak to be poles according to R. Ross) gives us a great chance for building stable and peaceful bipolar system in the Asia-Pacific, as each of them focuses on different regions of the world. See R. Ross, "The Geography of the Peace: East Asia In the Twenty-First Century," *International Security*, vol. 23, no. 4, Spring 1999.

Europe to North America, and now to the Asia-Pacific. The latter characterizes not only by the enormous economic growth, but also pursue for political tranquility. But in order to become a center stage of the world, the regional players should reach a regional consensus basing on three assumptions:

- 1) frosting in place the current geopolitical order,
- 2) common understanding of the region's constraints and realities,
- 3) need of a vision drawing out common elements from region's diversity into a form of a groundwork for a sense of community.⁴⁴

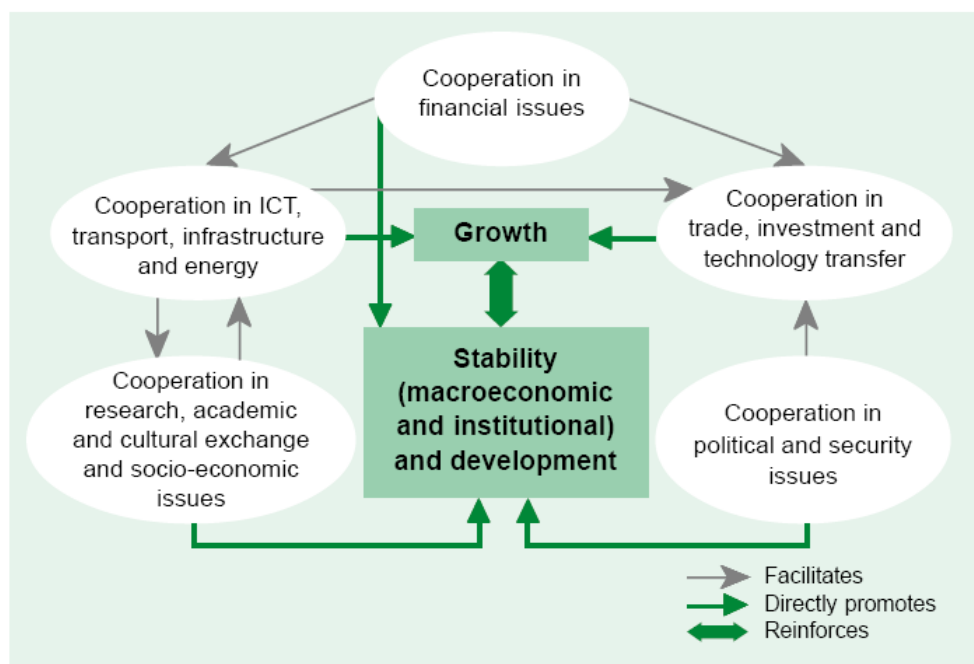
There is no doubt, the geopolitical situation has changed, since he published his article, even though, we must bear them in mind, referring to the aforementioned constraints of the Pacific Basin in the context of building an Asia-Pacific Community, especially assessing U.S. role in the process.

ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF THE REGION

As stated above, Asia-Pacific region should be perceived as a region especially in geo-economic categories. Hence, having in mind a perspective of further and enlarged cooperation, this article is going to pursue, we should exclude all other elements and focus only on the economic dimension of the regional cooperation. Moreover, to make the countries willing to participate (and eventually renounce a part of their sovereignty) the economic integration should give substantial benefits in return. Hence, answering real developmental problems of the region, and, especially in non-democratic countries, reinforcing their economies, giving their authorities chance of keeping the power thanks to the economic development (*e.g.* the case of the PRC). Figure 1 presents interlinkages of the regional cooperation in different sectors. Illustrating graphically crucial spheres of integration and their direct or indirect influence on the growth in the region, it focuses on the economic and institutional stability.

Figure 1. Regional cooperation in different sectors their interlinkages

⁴⁴ See Kishore Mahbubani, "An Asia-Pacific Consensus," *Foreign Affairs*, Sep./Oct. 1997.



Source: *Meeting the Challenges in an Era of Globalization by Strengthening Regional Development*

Cooperation, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, New York: United Nations, 2004, p. 26.

Looking at a rationale for creation of a new institution in the region and having in mind an economic background of the institution, we should focus on the following problems, characterized in Asian Development Bank as crucial developmental challenges of the region:⁴⁵

- 1) macro-economic stabilization, structural rebalancing and building institutions supporting the future growth;
- 2) regional and global integration needs strong macroeconomic policy and good governance;
- 3) problems of corruption, administrative problems, difficult contract enforcement⁴⁶;

⁴⁵ Not all of the enumerated in the report are put below, just ones perceived as the most important at this stage and reflecting problems of the region as a whole (the report lists also specific national problems).

⁴⁶ It may be perceived as a crucial problem in many countries, APEC structural reform project is attempting to meet problems of points 2 and 3. See more: *APEC Structural Reform*, Singapore: APEC Secretariat, 2008.

- 4) developing Asia could make a better use of its huge international reserves – investing in infrastructure, providing public goods, reducing public debts (significant positive change is visible in the aftermath of a current global financial crisis);
- 5) exchange rate management and securing given countries from speculating capital (we may observe it in Chiang Mai initiative);
- 6) lack of the proper infrastructure and efforts for changing this situation (including cross-border infrastructure);
- 7) growth should be based on two pillars – production and service sectors;
- 8) educational limits in some countries are also important barrier in development.⁴⁷

Integration in four basic areas, namely: trade, transport, ICT cooperation and finance was analyzed in a report: *Meeting the Challenges in an Era of Globalization by Strengthening Regional Development Cooperation* prepared by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific,⁴⁸ and the report *Progress of Regional Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific* made by the Asian Development Bank focuses on the following problems: trade and investment, cooperation in monetary and financial issues, managing of the regional public goods, cross-border infrastructure.⁴⁹

In trade and investment area we should focus on:

- 1) harmonization of the so-called ‘spaghetti bowl’ of regional trade agreements (bi-, mini-, multilateral, FTAs, PTAs, as different rules of origins are definitely an impediment for regional trade) – making them consistent with the WTO rules would give the highest benefits to the region;

Specific problems of the structural reform are to be found in: *2007 APEC Economic Policy Report*, Singapore: APEC Secretariat, 2007 and *2008 APEC Economic Policy Report*, Singapore: APEC Secretariat, 2008.

⁴⁷ See *Asian Development Outlook 2007: Growth amid Change*, Manila: Asian Development Bank, 2007, pp. 5-8.

⁴⁸ See *Meeting the Challenges in an Era of Globalization by Strengthening Regional Development Cooperation*, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, New York: United Nations, 2004, pp. 41-126.

⁴⁹ See *Progress of Regional Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific*, Manila: The Boao Forum for Asia and Asian Development Bank, 2007, pp. 9-62.

- 2) creation of an East Asian FTA (or a wider agreement – FTAAP – Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific), as cooperation in a hub-and-spoke system (with ASEAN, China, India as a hub) will probably limit the integration;⁵⁰
- 3) focusing on products standard harmonization, service trade and the development of the intellectual property rights protection system;⁵¹
- 4) increasing cooperation in trade facilitation, trans-border trade and regional investment agreements to fully benefit from the growing trade potential;
- 5) the need for gradual liberalization of the labor force flows – this problem seems to be especially difficult due to the immense gaps in the levels of economic development of those countries.⁵²

Infrastructural integration seems to be essential because of the need of linking the national markets, including creation of the physical linkages, which is a cornerstone for economic cooperation and integration. Those physical links, especially transport and communication routes are fundamental to the movement of goods, services, capital, people and information among the given countries. Apart from roads, railways or pipelines we should also build ICT infrastructure, as exchange of the information, e-trade and other innovations are at least equally important for a reduction of transaction costs as hard infrastructure.⁵³

ADB experts stress that at least equally important as the hard infrastructure are the proper regulations. Indeed, better roads and railways decrease costs of transport and logistics, but different legal and regulation systems, ineffective customs procedures and other barriers can definitely thwart the benefits of costly hard infrastructure. Finally we should focus on the

⁵⁰ See Fan Zhai, *Preferential Trade Agreements in Asia: Alternative Scenarios of "Hub and Spoke"*, ERD Working Paper, No. 83, Manila: Asian Development Bank, 2006.

⁵¹ See Ramgopal Agarwala, Brahm Prakash, *Regional Cooperation in Asia: Long-term Progress, Recent Retrogression, and the Way Forward*, ERD Working Paper Series, No. 28, Asian Development Bank, Manila 2002, pp. 19-20.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21.

⁵³ An interesting analysis of this problem, referring to the trade costs, trade and investments, as well as the economic growth and focusing on the asymmetry of the costs and benefits, eventually showing us the regional infrastructure as a public good, is to be found in Manabu Fujimura, *Cross-Border Transport Infrastructure, Regional Integration and Development*, ADB Institute Discussion Paper, no.16, Tokyo: Asian Development Bank Institute, 2006. As for the ICT infrastructure, see Chia Siow Yue, Jamus Jerome Lim, *Information Technology in Asia: New Development Paradigms*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2002.

sharing of the costs of building the infrastructure (fair, not necessarily equal) and stimuli resulting in having benefits of the infrastructure investments exceeding the costs.⁵⁴

The need for monetary and financial cooperation became visible especially after the Asian financial crisis (1997-98), as it thwarted achievements of the former fast growth. The crisis exposed the weaknesses of East Asian countries in situation when they had to deal with rapid changes in the globalized financial markets, simultaneously showing the need for building regional financial architecture, as the global financial institutions (especially IMF) and the U.S. appeared as unreliable in case of crisis.⁵⁵

Following the crisis, basing on the ASEAN+3, a mechanism basing on three following pillars was created to protect the region from the further crisis:

- 1) Economic Review and Policy Dialogue – in order to control and monitor capital flows, strengthen a banking system and early warning in case of coming crisis;⁵⁶
- 2) CMI Chiang Mai Initiative – a network of swap agreements within ASEAN (ca. 1 bn USD) and between ASEAN countries and China, Japan and South Korea (ca. 36.5 bn USD) – in order to protect national currencies in case of speculating attack,⁵⁷ Chiang Mai Initiative was multilateralized in 2010, pooling 120 bn USD and subsequently ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) was created in 2011;

⁵⁴ See *Regional Cooperation and Integration Strategy*, Manila: Asian Development Bank, 2006, pp. 11-12.

⁵⁵ See Wing Thye Woo, “The Asian Financial Crisis: Hindsight, Insight, Foresight,” *ASEAN Economic Bulletin*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2000; Yunjong Wang, “The Asian Financial Crisis and Its Aftermath: Do We Need a Regional Financial Arrangement?,” *ASEAN Economic Bulletin*, vol. 17, no. 2, 2000; Yunjong Wang, *The Asian Financial Crisis and the Need for Regional Financial Cooperation*, KIEP Working Paper 99-14, Seoul: Korea Institute for International Economic Policy, 1999.

⁵⁶ See Masahiro Kawai, Cindy Houser, *Evolving ASEAN+3 ERP: Towards Peer Reviews or Due Diligence?*, Asian Development Bank Institute, Discussion Paper, no. 79, September 2007.

⁵⁷ See Kanit Sangsubhan, *Exploring Ways to Enhance the Functions of the Chiang Mai Initiative in the Medium Term*, March 2005, available at: www.aseansec.org/17906.pdf (last accessed June 15, 2009), He Fan, Zhang Bin, Zhang Ming, *After the CMI: The Future of Asian Monetary Cooperation and China's Role*, Institute of World Economics and Politics, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, available at: www.aseansec.org/17904.pdf (last accessed June 15, 2009), J. Ravalo, *Enhancing the Chiang Mai Initiative (CMI) to Address the Medium-Term Needs and Vulnerabilities of the Region: A Possible Capital Market Solution to the Problem of Risk*, available at: www.aseansec.org/17907.pdf (last accessed June 15, 2009).

- 3) Asian Bond Market Initiative (including created in 2003 *Asian Bond Fund*) – it aims at providing stable long-term financing through bonds and promotion of local currencies denominated bonds.⁵⁸

We may also observe a discussion on the possibility of creation of the Asian Monetary Union, basing on the theory of the optimal currency area and experiences of the European Union. Regional monetary system could be useful in the Asia-Pacific in order to stabilize the exchange rates, better management of the currency reserves and macroeconomic cooperation. It's important for the future, deeper cooperation. As for the optimal currency area theory – we can notice that openness and the level of inflation are beneficial for the currency integration. On the other hand, however, instability of the real exchange rates, level of financial integration and finally, most importantly in my point of view, level of economic synchronization, as well as the political conditions are much less beneficial. Hence, in current situation, Asian Monetary Union (we must exclude the possibility of an Asia-Pacific Monetary Union as a political fiction) may be taken into consideration only as a long term goal.⁵⁹

Finally, the fourth pillar of the economic integration, is management of the regional public goods. Working on regional integration in the Pacific Basin, we should focus on:

- 1) environment protection;
- 2) clean energy and energy security;
- 3) infectious diseases – it becomes even more important with growing mobility of people in integrated areas;
- 4) reaction for the natural disasters;
- 5) good governance, fighting the corruption;
- 6) eradication of human trafficking, trans-border crimes;⁶⁰

⁵⁸ See Kiyohiko Fokushima, "Challenges for Currency Cooperation in East Asia," *Asia-Pacific Review*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2004. Zob. Hong Chen, *A New Approach to the Asian Finance Cooperation: Asian Bond Market Initiative*, Seoul: Korea Institute for International Economic Policy, 2004.

⁵⁹ See Kyung Tae Lee, Deok Ryong Yoon, *A Roadmap for East Asian Monetary Integration: The Necessary First Step*, KIEP Working Paper 07-04, Seoul: Korea Institute for International Economic Policy 2007; Montserrat Font-Vilalta, Joan Costa-Font, "A Note on the Feasibility of a Monetary Area in the East Asia", *Asia-Europe Journal*, vol. 4, 2006; Joanne Tan Nuo Ing, "The Possibility of an Asian Monetary Union Drawing from the EMU Experience", *Asia-Europe Journal*, vol. 1, 2003; M. Grabowski, "Monetary Integration in Europe and Asia and Economic Crises," in: M. Grabowski, P. Laidler, *The World in Economic Crisis: Remarks from the SYLFF Community*, Krakow: Jagiellonian University Press, 2012, pp. 57-73.

⁶⁰ More about regional public goods in Asia and the Pacific see *Progress of Regional Cooperation and Integration in Asia and the Pacific*, op. cit., pp. 37-48.

Summing up, we may say that successful institution of regional economic integration in Asia and the Pacific should respond to the aforementioned needs and work in the above four pillars of integration. It's obvious, such an institution may be created only by the countries fully committed to the idea of regional integration, not only because of their deep beliefs and convictions, but also expecting real benefits for the costs they should bear. Hence – not only we need declarations, but also binding mechanisms offering some benefits, but requiring certain actions and behaviors, supported by adequate institutions in the region and, what seems to be crucial, financed on the proper level. We may consider, whether the following, existing and proposed institutions can respond these requirements properly. Thinking about an Asia-Pacific Community, we must take integration in aforementioned four areas as a *sine qua non* condition, otherwise there is no way of moving the process forward⁶¹.

ASIA-PACIFIC COMMUNITY

Kevin Rudds address before the Asia Society in June 2008 was an important step in the creation of the new institution. His proposal to create an Asia-Pacific Community was based on an assumption that we should prepare for an Asia-Pacific century, including the dynamics of the region and the new challenges region will face in the future. Hence, an institution dealing with economy, politics and security, engaging in the full spectrum of dialogue and cooperation, spanning the entire Pacific and encompassing the U.S., Japan,

⁶¹ There are important economic benefits of a free trade in a bigger region, hence integration within Asia-Pacific seems definitely more profitable. In an analysis presented by P. Drysdale and J. Drake-Brockman impact of trade liberalization on Chinese GDP was shown. Assuming that in case of WTO liberalization GDP growth would be 100%, integration within APEC would be 61%, within ASEAN+3 41%, within +3 (China, Japan, South Korea) 35%, in case of Greater China (China, Hong Kong, Taiwan) 28%, and China and ASEAN just 7%. See J. Drake-Brockman, P. Drysdale, *History of Regional Economic Integration in East Asia*, pp. 2-3, available at: http://www.crawford.anu.edu.au/pdf/staff/peter_drysdale/mexico.pdf (last accessed June 15, 2009). F. Bergsten estimates that creation of the East Asian Free Trade Area, would bring losses of ca. 25 \$ bn. annually. It was one of the crucial arguments of this economist to support creation of the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP). See F. Bergsten, "A Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific in the Wake of the Faltering Doha Round: Trade Policy Alternatives for APEC," in Ch. Morrison, E. Pedrosa, *An APEC Trade Agenda?: The Political Economy of a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific*, Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2007, p. 20. Arguments against the creation of the FTAAP, focusing on U.S. domestic conditions are to be found in V. Aggarwal, "The Political Economy of a Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific: A U.S. Perspective," in Ch. Morrison, E. Pedrosa, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-72.

China, India, Indonesia and the other states of the region. He also declared existing institutions as unable to deal properly with these new challenges.⁶²

This proposal was widely commented, but also broadly criticized by both scholars, and journalists, who accused Kevin Rudd of an aspiration for creation of the Asia-Pacific Union (an analogy to the European Union, as he referred to the European example). There are also substantial doubts, connected with a formation of a new, probably inefficient regional organization.⁶³

Moreover, in a *State of the Region Survey*, published by PECC, prepared for the APEC summit in Lima (2008), we may see that reinforcing the existing institutions, like APEC and ASEAN is important or very important for 62% of the respondents, enlarging the scope of existing institutions is important or very important for 59% of respondents, and creating new regional institutions is perceived as an important or very important only to 25% of the respondents.⁶⁴ We may see, therefore, that the opinion leaders of the region do not support creation of a new regional institution. Hence, I can imagine this new institution only in case it would be completely new quality in the region.

The Prime Minister Rudd himself engaged seriously in realizing his proposal, sending Richard Woolcott, a diplomat, whose mission was crucial for the creation of APEC 20 years earlier.⁶⁵ Kevin Rudd modified his vision, taking into account scholars' remarks and Woolcott's mission results and presented this modified version in May 2009 (giving certain role to regional organizations) during Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore.⁶⁶

⁶² See K. Rudd, *Address to the Asia Society AustralAsia Centre, Sydney: It's time to build an Asia Pacific Community*, 04 June, available at: http://www.pm.gov.au/media/Speech/2008/speech_0286.cfm (last accessed June 15, 2009).

⁶³ See the polemic D. Meagher, *Who Said Anything about an Asia Pacific Union*, available at: <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2008/06/06/who-said-anything-about-an-asia-pacific-union> (last accessed June 15, 2009). See also G. Hawke, *The Asia Pacific Community: Objectives, Not Institutions*, available at: <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2009/06/15/the-asia-pacific-community-objectives-not-institutions> (last accessed June 15, 2009).

⁶⁴ See *Survey Results*, Undertaken in cooperation with the Asian Development Bank Office of Regional Economic Integration, in *State of the Region Report 2008-2009*, Provisional Release, Pacific Economic Cooperation Council, available at: www.pecc.org (last accessed June 15, 2009).

⁶⁵ R. Woolcott visited 21 states of the region (all members of APEC but Taiwan and Hong Kong, all members of ASEAN but Myanmar/Burma) More about his mission, see P. Kelly, "Shape of the Future," *The Australian*, December 20, 2008, available at: <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,25197,24824788-7583,00.html> (last accessed June 15, 2009).

⁶⁶ He announced that R. Woolcott's mission's report will be presented at the following East Asian Summit and this summit will have 1,5 formula (representatives of different groups, including scholars, will be invited) to discuss the problem and further works on the proposal. See K. Rudd, *Keynote Address*, The 8th IISS Asian

Simultaneously we could observe scholarly debate about future shape of the institution. Hadi Soesastro⁶⁷ characterizes four basic functions for the new organization. The forum for the state and governments' leaders meetings, limited but representative for the region⁶⁸, forum where all the aspects arising in APEC and ARF could be discussed. These four functions are:

- 1) providing forum for regional leaders to address the full range of critical regional and global issues;
- 2) strengthening and dealing effectively with the consequences of economic integration (especially trade and investment);
- 3) addressing issues of political change and security;
- 4) providing a basis for education the public and opinion leaders about the region.⁶⁹

This seems to be consistent with the idea of Kevin Rudd, although not creating the new quality the region needs, just another photo-op in a bit limited group of the leaders.

If we further look at the existing voices dealing with the new regional architecture component, we can enumerate three important remarks, which seem to be crucial, if the project may be reasonable:

- 1) respecting the specifics of the region, especially the openness of the project, equality of the subjects, connected with a respect to their diversity and evolution;⁷⁰
- 2) basing on regional institutions – in security and political matters on EAS and ARF, in economic issues on APT and APEC;⁷¹
- 3) restricting membership to 8 or 10 states, what would result in higher efficiency of a new forum (as an alternative 18 members, *i.e.* enlarging EAS by adding the U.S. and Russia).⁷²

Security Summit, The Shangri-La Dialogue, Singapore, 29 May 2009, available at: <http://www.iiss.org/~keynote-address-kevin-rudd> (last accessed June 15, 2009).

⁶⁷ He is the Executive Director of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies in Jakarta, primary think tank for regional integration in East Asia and the Pacific.

⁶⁸ He suggests Asian members of G-20, *i.e.* Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan and South Korea.

⁶⁹ See H. Soesastro, *Architectural Momentum in Asia and the Pacific*, available at: www.eastasiaforum.org/2009/06/14/architectural-momentum-in-asia-and-the-pacific (last accessed June 15, 2009).

⁷⁰ Openness refers here to an open regionalism and avoiding any form of discrimination; equality means that action should be beneficial to all participants and respects their diversity; evolution refers to the gradual, pragmatic and continuous process of voluntary cooperation, basing on the consensus. See A. Elek, *Kevin Rudd's Vision for Asia-Pacific Institution-Building*, available at: <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2008/06/12/kevin-rudd%E2%80%99s-vision-for-asia-pacific-institution-building> (last accessed June 15, 2009).

⁷¹ See H. Soesastro, *Kevin Rudd's Architecture for the Asia Pacific*, available at: <http://www.eastasiaforum.org/2008/06/09/kevin-rudds-architecture-for-the-asia-pacific> (last accessed June 15, 2009).

Probably the first proposal of having 8 members of the APC would be the most efficient, although due to political and economic constraints (in a model presented in this article) seems to be unfeasible, unless we'll have just regional G-8. It would fulfill the assumptions of Kevin Rudd of being a place to discuss all the issues, but wouldn't bring any added value to the region.

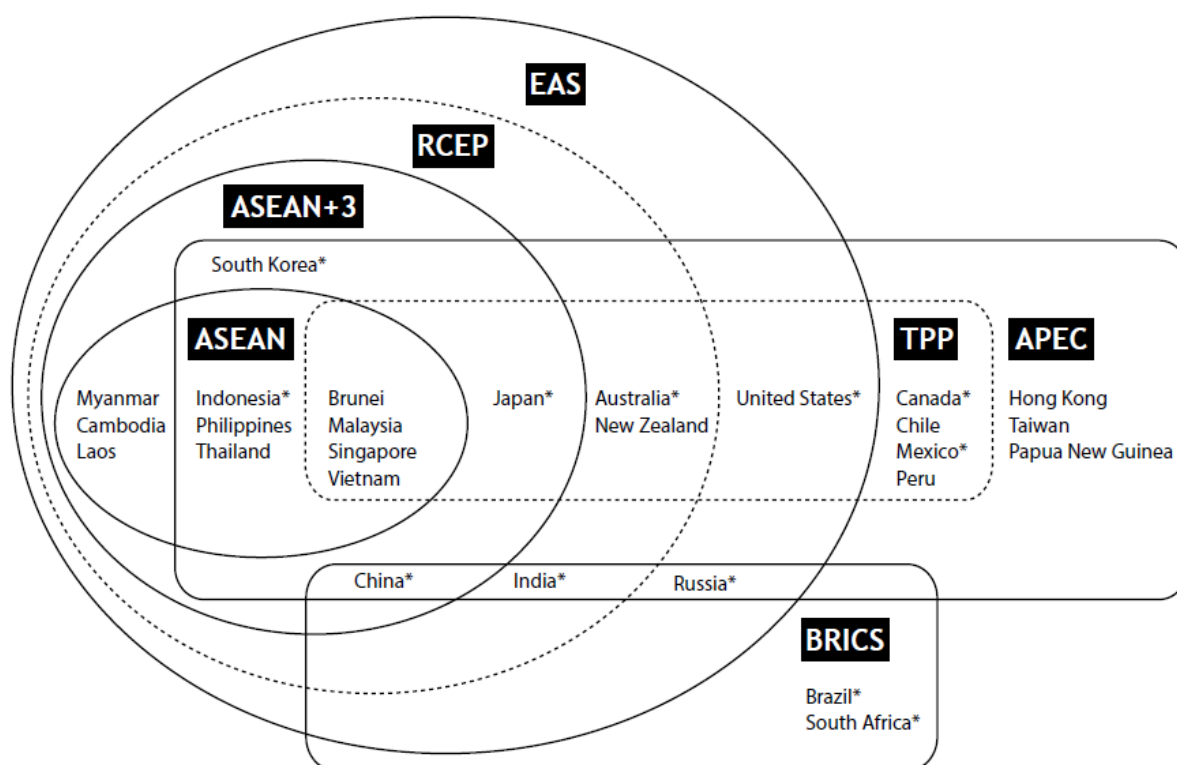
Therefore, despite formal fall of the initial proposal, enlargement of the East Asia Summit by adding the United States and Russia created an institution fulfilling basic assumptions of initial Kevin Rudd's proposal, unfortunately only in terms of membership. Regional institutions, including ASEAN, ASEAN+3, EAS or APEC are concurring and competing in fulfilling other conditions for higher level of economic integration in the region, hence we may expect it as a prospect for the future.

REGIONAL ARCHITECTURE

Theories and integration areas described in previous sections are basis for the existence and development of the regional architecture of the Asia-Pacific. The current structure of regional architecture in the Asia-Pacific region is depicted at figure 2.

Figure 2. Regional architecture in the Asia-Pacific

⁷² In case of G-8 we would have the U.S., China, Japan, Russia, India, Indonesia, South Korea and Australia; in case of G-10 – instead of Indonesia, the Troika of ASEAN would be present. See P. Kelly, *op. cit.* Enlarging EAS by adding Russia and the U.S. seems the most logical version for now.



Source: "East Asian Regional Economic Architecture," in: T. Robles, K. Pitakdumrongkit (eds.), *RISS Policy Report: Governance of East Asian Regional Economic Architectures*, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, 2013, p. 17.

The biggest structure, being generally rather trans-regional organization, is naturally Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), organization created in 1989 and encompassing 21 economies from both sides of the Pacific. On the other hand, the most developed one, and the one aiming highest is Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), created in 1967 and gathering 10 Southeast Asian Countries. This organization is a core (or in the driving seat) of other regional organizations, like the ASEAN Plus Three structure, created after the Asian Economic Crisis 1997-1998 in order to support especially monetary and financial cooperation (10 ASEAN countries plus China, Japan, South Korea). The crisis became a catalyst for regional financial integration, based on three initiatives: the Chiang Mai Initiative (within ASEAN+3, i.e. 10 ASEAN countries and the People's Republic of China, Japan and South Korea) signed in 2000, a series of bilateral swap arrangements, and the Asian Bond Market Initiative in 2002 (which was followed by the creation of the Asian Bond Fund) also

in Chiang Mai.⁷³ Crucial developments were the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization (2010), pooling the reserves of 120 billion USD, and the subsequent creation of the ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) in 2011.⁷⁴

Second structure is East Asian Summit (EAS), created in 2005, what was perceived as a failure of American policy in the region, as the U.S. was not a member of this structure till November 2011. EAS initially encompassed 16 countries, including 10 ASEAN members plus China, Japan, Korea and Australia, New Zealand and India. Initially (according to East Asia Study Group Report of 2002) included 13 members – hence ASEAN+3 into planned East Asian Summit, but especially due to American pressure 16 countries were invited.⁷⁵ The initiative of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPEA) of 2006 is worth mentioning.⁷⁶ Finally, in November 2011 Russia and the United States joined, making the organization ASEAN+8 group, and the CEPEA less popular, and giving a priority for regional integration of East Asia (with the proposal of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership of 2011).⁷⁷ Even though Kevin Rudd's initial idea of the Asia-Pacific failed, ASEAN+8 or enlarged East Asia Summit corresponds with it clearly in terms of membership. There is, as it was before as well, lack of clear goals either for EAS16 or EAS18, having political ambitions, but no tools.

Summing up, even though Kevin Rudd's diagnosis of the regional situation and proposal of the Asia-Pacific Community seem to be correct, there were too many premises against it, making it unfeasible. Especially, proposals of limiting the number of participants in order to increase the efficiency of the new organization seemed doubtful, as we still have the powers in the playing field. And these are the great powers, whose interests are often contradictory and block the regional integration. At the same time, ASEAN is a big loser of the new arrangement, hence this proposal seem to be unacceptable for the organization being

⁷³ Ming Wan, *The Political Economy of East Asia: Striving for Wealth and Power*, Washington: CQ Press, 2008, pp. 307-309.

⁷⁴ See Chalongsob Sussangkarn, "The Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization: Origin, Development and Outlook," ADBI Working Paper Series, 230, 2010 and John Ciorciari, "Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralization," *Asian Survey*, 51 (5), 2011.

⁷⁵ EAS information and documents may be accessed at: http://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/ForeignRelation/Brief_-_EAS_-_as_on_31.1.2013.pdf (Web. 25.02.2014).

⁷⁶ See more in: *Comprehensive Economic Partnership for East Asia (CEPEA/ASEAN+6)*, [http://aric.adb.org/fta/comprehensive-economic-partnership-for-east-asia-\(cepea-asean6\)](http://aric.adb.org/fta/comprehensive-economic-partnership-for-east-asia-(cepea-asean6)), Web. 25.02.2014.

⁷⁷ See: Guiding Principles and Objectives for Negotiating the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, <http://www10.iadb.org/intal/intalcdi/PE/CM%202013/11581.pdf>, Web. 25.02.2014.

in a driving seat of the integration within East Asia (APT, EAS) and formally even Pacific (ASEAN Regional Forum).

On the other hand, accepting Andrew Elek's proposal of having another "do-not" organization probably makes the Asia-Pacific Community idea feasible, but at the same time, results in an APEC two, an organization that faces the same limits that block regional integration now. Hence, we have brand new institution, powerless, without proper resources, without mechanisms of solving the disputes and starting its integration from the beginning (a regress of 20 years).

Finally, basing the regional architecture on reformed regional institutions is somehow correct and in some way supported in this paper, but the reform process within a new structure seems equally difficult in the new structure, as it is in the existing one. It may stem from the fact that goals put forward by the leaders of the region are much more ambitious than the possibilities of achieving them. It results in perception integration processes as just declarative, what leads to the falling enthusiasm for the integration and, a vicious circle, even lower degree of transmission of declaration into the reality.⁷⁸

There is no doubt, however, that pursue for the reform of existing institutions and focusing the attention of scholars, politicians and media on the existing problems, thanks to Kevin Rudd's proposal was beneficial for the region and its integration institutions. This is especially important, as without the reform existing Pacific Rim institutions will be unable to fulfill multiple tasks they should fulfill without proper staff and financing. Moreover, this tasks overlap with the tasks of other regional institutions, just deepening the institutional chaos in the Asia-Pacific. Hence, I do hope, at least rationalization of existing institutions is possible at this moment, although also this dimension reform seem to be long-lasting and difficult.

Finally, even though Kevin Rudd himself seemed to be very engaged in the project of the Asia-Pacific Community, the chances for the successful conclusion of the proposal were quite limited. Such conclusions stem from the theoretical assumptions, presented above (both the integrative potential model and the gravity model of trade do not support integration within the Pacific Basin), but also from the reluctance of the scholars and politicians to the creation of a new regional structure, which will not fulfill an important role in regional

⁷⁸ See more in Deepak Nair, "Regionalism in the Asia Pacific/East Asia: A Frustrated Regionalism?," *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 31, no. 1, 2009.

integration, will not respond properly to the integration needs, and will probably use modest resources and duplicate the work of other regional institutions.

Hence, reforming existing institutions, seems definitely better solution, unless there are states ready for creating an institution being a new quality for the region, including supranational dimension (hard to imagine in case of the U.S.), what sounds like a political fiction at the moment. In the framework of the reform, we should restrict the scope of work of APEC, as its broadening agenda, especially in areas like security or environment seems just dysfunctional for this institution. I would recommend focusing on economic issues, especially trade and investment liberalization and facilitation, and ECOTECH (in case of finding additional resources for proper fulfilling tasks in this area of cooperation). All security issues (including soft and humanitarian security) should be ceded to ARF. In case this organization will not be able to deal with the issues given (what is quite likely) one should also think about through reform (what will be difficult due to the ASEAN) or creation of a new institution, with limited membership, focusing on security and political issues.

Therefore ASEAN+8 (EAS18) may be better solution for the region, than any form of a complete new institution, facing similar problems, as existing ones. In this context EAS18 may be even a success in comparison to the initial Kevin Rudd's proposal of the Asia-Pacific Community, especially having in mind development of its core, namely ASEAN itself.

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European Common Security and Defense Policy: The Case of Visegrad Battlegroup

Key words: Visegrad Battlegroup, CSDP, rapid- response,

The Origins of the EU Battlegroups within the CSDP framework: a Conceptual Introduction

The nature of European security policy has certainly undergone a transformation in the past two decades, stemming from a large array of decisive factors. Despite the historically deep political and military ties between Europe and the United States, American priorities with regards to security and foreign policy have undergone a shift, especially following the end of the Cold War. The US security agenda can be now more accurately described as one of disengagement with regards to Europe, with its focus on Asia and the Middle East. Furthermore, Europe is ever more confronted with other potentially note-worthy economic, political and military rising powers, such as China for example. In light of the above mentioned geopolitical changes, the European Union was left to share the burden of maintaining peace and security in the international system. With the end of the Cold War and the ever increasing threat of global terrorism, agendas and interests have changed considerably which also consequently altered the state of transatlantic security relationships Europe has maintained for so long. In essence, the EU was faced with a clear choice: pooling of resources and military capabilities whilst strengthening regional security cooperation among member states, or suffer the inevitable decline in international military influence and consequently pave the way for a European security gap. Indisputably EU's choice is one that isn't really a choice, and European integration must go beyond just fiscal, political, social and

economic cooperation, but one that must absolutely include security and defense interoperability. Consequently, the plethora of various factors, challenges, as well as EU's inclination for military self-sufficiency served as an impetus for what would eventually become Common Security and Defense Policy.

The European Common Security and Defense Policy, or commonly referred to as CSDP marked a significant change in European security integration. Although the traditional EU-US-NATO relationship has remained a principal pillar within the framework of European security, for the very first time the EU was venturing out as its own viable security partner, which allowed for a considerable degree of autonomy. This bold move toward self-sufficiency was viewed by some as a *“threat to undermine NATO's status as the preeminent security organization”*⁷⁹. This assertion however lacks credibility on many accounts, which on its own merits a separate debate on the matter, and thusly will not be discussed in this article. The CSDP was initially introduced as European Security and Defense Policy, or ESDP back in 1999. Its birth came about as a result of an agreement signed a year prior by the French and British governments, represented by Tony Blair and Jacques Chirac, in St. Malo at the Cologne European Council summit. What became known as the St. Malo Declaration states that the EU *‘must have the capacity for autonomous action backed by credible military forces... in order to respond to international crises’*⁸⁰. The ESDP came into force with the Treaty of Amsterdam and became an integral part of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, or CFSP of the European Union. With the entry of the Lisbon Treaty a decade later, the ESDP was re-baptized into what we know today as the Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). The EU security policy went further than just cognominal changes, but appropriated new mechanism for capability development, or Permanent Structured Cooperation, which according to Article 42(6) of the Treat of European Union, essentially allows for Member States to strengthen their cooperation in military matters by creating such a permanent structure among themselves⁸¹. These amendments would eventually provide momentum to what became known as the EU Battlegroups. The concept of such battle groups wasn't new and was initially proposed back in 1999 at the European Council Meeting in Helsinki, which emphasized the *“objective . . . to have an autonomous capacity to take*

⁷⁹ J. A. Koops, “Unstrategic Partners: NATO's Relations with the European Union”, in W. Kremp and B. Meyer (eds.), *Entangling Alliance: 60 Jahre NATO. Geschichte, Gegenwart, Zukunft*, Trier: Wissenschaftsverlag, 2010, pp. 41-78

⁸⁰ D. Keohane, “ESDP and NATO”, in G. Grevi, D. Helly, D. Keohane (eds.), *European Security and Defense Policy: the First Ten Years (1999-2009)*, 2009, p 13

⁸¹ “Permanent Structured Cooperation”, *Europa Summary of EU Legislation Online* , at http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/glossary/permanent_structured_cooperation_en.htm, 17 July 2014.

decisions and, where NATO as a whole is not engaged, to launch and then to conduct EU-led military operations in response to international crises. . . . [With] special attention . . . given to a rapid reaction capability”⁸².

In the context of CFSP, the Lisbon Treaty stipulated for a far larger emphasis on mutual political solidarity, as well as convergence and early consultation among Member States in devising a common foreign and security policy. The changes that were implemented as a result of the Lisbon Treaty also expanded the scope of maneuverability under the common security and defense policy, with the most significant innovation consisting of the envisaged provisions on ‘permanent structured cooperation’⁸³. As already previously mentioned permanent structured cooperation, falls within the framework of EU’s enhanced cooperation, which does not only entail matters related defense (it includes matters of divorce or patents for example). The permanent structure cooperation in the scope of EU security and defense, or PSCD was designed to foster enhanced collaboration, cooperation and pool resources amongst participating Member States in the following areas:

- In the fields related to defense equipment acquisition, research, funding and utilization, notably the programs and initiatives of the European Defense Agency (EDA) (e.g. Code of Conduct on Defense Procurement)
- To supply, either at national level or as a component of multinational force groups, targeted combat units for the missions planned, structured at a tactical level as a battle group, with support elements including transport (airlift, sealift) and logistics, within a period of five to 30 days, in particular in response to requests from the United Nations Organization, and which can be sustained for an initial period of 30 days and be extended up to at least 120 days.
- To carry out in the above timeframes the tasks of joint disarmament operations, humanitarian and rescue tasks, military advice and assistance tasks, conflict prevention and peace-keeping, combat forces in crisis management, peace-making and post-conflict stabilization⁸⁴.

⁸² “Presidency Conclusion Helsinki European Council”, *Council of the European Union Online*, 10-11 December 1999, Annex IV at

http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/ec/acfa4c.htm, 17 July 2014.

⁸³ G. Grevi, “ESDP Institutions”, in in G. Grevi, D. Helly, D. Keohane (eds.), *European Security and Defense Policy: the First Ten Years (1999-2009)*, 2009, p 63

⁸⁴ “Article 42(6), Article 43(1), Article 46, Protocol 10 of the amended Treaty of European Union”, *Council of the European Union*, Brussels, 15 April 2008

Participation in such PSCD-related initiatives usually involved Member States with stronger military capabilities and more importantly willingness to enter more binding commitments with a view to undertaking demanding crisis management tasks⁸⁵. Furthermore, the mechanism of enhanced cooperation, calls forth only those Member States who have an explicit desire to engage in closer cooperation, where not all EU states are necessarily in favor of such increased integration, especially on matters relating to security and defense. Since the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty, the concept of enhanced cooperation with regards to defense has manifested from a theoretical proposition into reality, with the introduction and subsequent development and proliferation of rapid response units under the CSDP umbrella. These small military formations became commonly referred to as EU Battlegroups, or EUBG. These battlegroups serve as a perfect illustration of enhanced regional cooperation on matters of defense, peace-keeping, peace-management at the like among EU Member States and are even considered by some as a “standing army”⁸⁶.

The concept of EUBG: Structure, Purpose and Key Characteristics

The introduction of the EU Battlegroup meant to serve as yet another instrument in EU's efforts to undertake its share in sustaining global security. Among other factors, what gave the EUBG its unique character is that, unlike other prior military structures within the scope of EU-NATO operations previously implemented, these units were meant to act as an *early and rapid response* mechanism if and when necessary. A EUBG can be formed by a single EU Member State or by what's called a framework nation who is supported by other contributing countries (as seen below). Since 2007, the European Union is home to 19 EUBG, or battalions that are currently fully operational, from 22 Member States, including 1 non-EU NATO State and are as follows⁸⁷:

⁸⁵ G. Grevi, “ESDP Institutions”, in in G. Grevi, D. Helly, D. Keohane (eds.), *European Security and Defense Policy: the First Ten Years (1999-2009)*, 2009, p 63

⁸⁶ “New Force Behind Foreign Policy”, *BBC News Online*, 15 March 2007, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/6441417.stm>, 18 July 2014.

⁸⁷ R. Hamelink, “The Battlegroup Concept: Giving the EU a concrete ‘military’ face”, *EuroFuture*, (2005), p 10.

Battle Group	Framework Nation	Participants
French Battle Group	France	None
Italian Battle Group	Italy	None
Spanish Battle Group	Spain	None
British Battle Group	United Kingdom	Sweden, Netherlands, Latvia, Lithuania
French-German Battle Group	France	Germany, Luxemburg, Belgium, Spain
French-Belgian Battle Group	France	Belgium
Battle Group 107	Germany	Netherlands, Finland
German-Czech-Austrian Battle Group	Germany	Czech Republic, Croatia, Ireland, Austria
Italian-Hungarian-Slovenian Battle Group	Italy	Hungary and Slovenia
Hispano-Italian Amphibious Battle Group	Italy	Spain, Greece, Portugal
Battle Group I-2010	Poland	Germany, Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania
Nordic Battle Group	Sweden	Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ireland, Norway
UK-Dutch Battle Group	United Kingdom	Netherlands
Balkan Battle Group	Greece	Bulgaria, Cyprus, Romania
Czech-Slovak Battle Group	Czech Republic	Slovak Republic
Spanish-led Battle Group	Spain	Germany, France, Portugal
Italian-Romanian-Turkish Battle Group	Italy	Romania, Turkey
Eurofor	Portugal	Spain, Italy, France
Weimar Battle Group	Poland	Germany, France

Source: EU Battle Groups, Wikipedia Encyclopedia, 18 July 2014, available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/EU_Battlegroup#cite_note-11

Besides the EUBG being characterized as a force package with a high degree of readiness, another important and outstanding feature of these rapid response units is that their mandate goes beyond traditional military operations outlined in the European Security Strategy. They also include missions that are contained within the Petersberg Tasks⁸⁸. The Petersberg Tasks, defined in 1992 in a summit in Bonn at the Council of Western European Union (WEU) focused primarily on military operations of humanitarian, peace-keeping and peace-making nature⁸⁹. The overall scope of the EUBG mission is summarized in the table below.

Petersberg Tasks	European Security Strategy (ESS) Tasks
Humanitarian/ Rescue	Joint Disarmament Operations
Peacekeeping	Support for 3 rd Countries in combating terrorism
Task of Combat Force in peace-making, crisis management	Security Sector Reform (SSR) operations as part of broader institution building

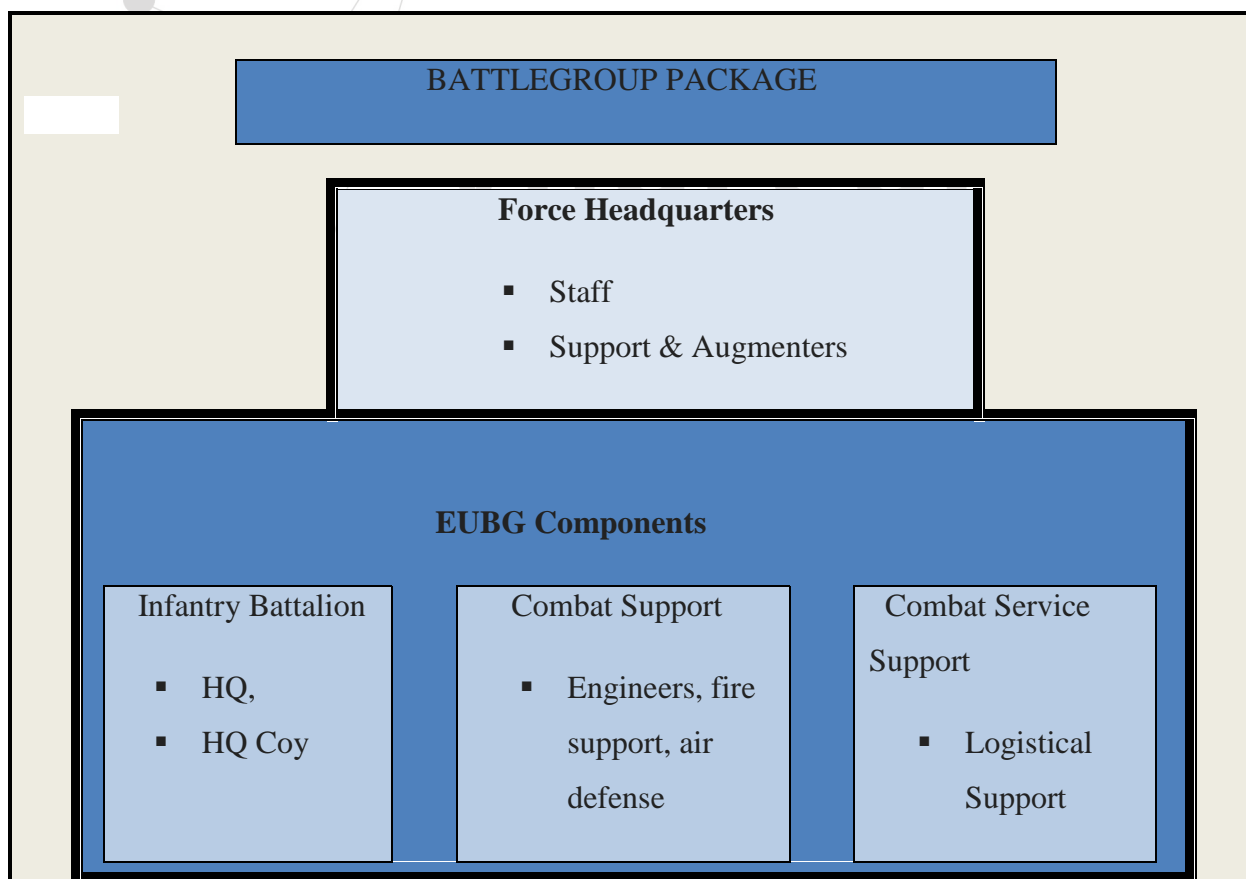
Source: G. Lindstrom, "Enter the EU Battle Groups", *Challot Paper*, no. 97, (2007), p. 17

Although these rapid response units are referred to as 'battlegroups', this can be somewhat misleading and can entertain several different connotations. Traditionally speaking, the idea of a battlegroup conjures a mental picture of a military formation that is considerable in size or is associated with naval or water-based operations such as aircraft carriers or fleets for example. The EUBG is none of those things. In fact, its name is rather paradoxical for in reality these units are relatively small, in military terminology can be equivocal to a battalion, or a task force. These 'task forces' generally are comprised of about only 1,500 personnel, with appropriate combat support, and are referred to as " *the minimum militarily effective*,

⁸⁸ G. Lindstrom, "Enter the EU Battle Groups", *Challot Paper*, no. 97, (2007), p. 26

⁸⁹ "Petersberg Declaration", *Western European Union Council of Ministers*, Bonn 19 June 1992 at <http://www.weu.int/documents/920619peten.pdf>, 18 July 2014.

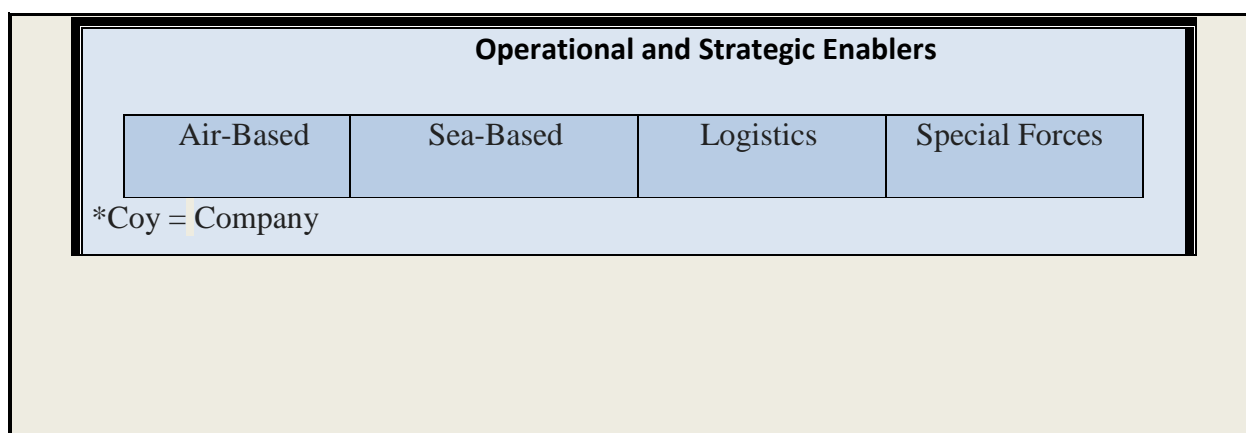
*credible, rapidly deployable, coherent force package capable of stand-alone operations, or for the initial phase of larger operations*⁹⁰. This essentially means that despite its unconventional and relatively limited size, the EUBG possesses capacity for large-scale operations. Moreover, another key characteristic of the EUBG is that they are rapidly deployable at short notice, generally within 5 to 10 days of a Council reaching a decision to launch an operation. The sustainability of such a battalion is estimated to a minimum of 30 days, with an option for an extension of such a military intervention for up to 120 days⁹¹. The EUBG is also highly multidimensional and hence quite effective in part due to its internal structure. A ‘typical’ battalion is comprised of a headquarter company, three infantry companies and supporting personnel, which can include units such as a medical facility, or a fire unit (see table below). This type of internal composition facilitates a more effective response due to an increased scope of autonomy between each internal unit⁹². It is important to point out however, that the exact composition is evaluated and decided upon depending on the nature of the operation and is solely at the discretion of the contributing Member States.



⁹⁰ "EU Battlegroups", *EU Secretariat Factsheet EU BG*, 2 November 2006

⁹¹ "EU Battlegroups", *European Parliament Directorate- General for External Policies of the Union Directorate B*, 12 September 2006, p. 6

⁹² G. Lindstrom, "Enter the EU Battle Groups"..., p.15.



Source: Adapted from R. Hamelink, “ The Battlegroup Concept: Giving the EU a concrete ‘military’ face”, *EuroFuture*, (2005), p 9.

Participation in a particular battlegroup is strictly on a voluntary basis, which consequently means that if a Member States pledges to commit, it is then responsible for the corresponding training, equipment, evaluation and certification⁹³. The continued sustainability of such rapid response units is contingent on interoperability among participating Member States, although it isn't entirely problem-free. The nature of the battlegroup and very way it is created underlines enhanced inter-State cooperation, not only because EUBG is essentially an *ad hoc* coalition of the willing, but because it is entirely dependent on shared and accelerated decision-making. In this context, it is equally important to emphasize that the period from the onset of expressed willingness for EUBG coordination between willing contributing countries to the actual certification process is very difficult and highly demanding, as well as rather lengthy, estimated anywhere from 3 to 5 years⁹⁴. The aforementioned certification process refers to a set of highly arduous criteria a participating Member State must adhere to related to a defined military capability. The process is strictly monitored by the EU Military Committee and assisted by the EU Military Staff.

The EUBG does not follow a pre-set structure requirement, leaving much flexibility based on individual capabilities or interest in the hands of the participating Member States. A framework nation, whether alone or working alongside other participating Member States has

⁹³ Document: Increasing the Flexibility and Usability of the EU Battlegroups, 15336/09, Brussels, 4 November 2009, point 6.

⁹⁴ B. Šmaguc, “The EU Battlegroups (EUBGs)- successful story or a paper tiger”, *CIRR* vol. XIX, no. 68 (2013), p 103

an opportunity formulate a battlegroup package of its choosing. This means, for instance, that a Member State can propose and subsequently coordinate a battlegroup that is strictly geared toward mountain-related operations or one with amphibious capabilities (sea-based). This in turn creates a broader spectrum of capabilities which can be more easily applied to a larger variety of operations.

Although the concept of the battlegroups has been continuously expanding and has a proven record of effectiveness not only in military capability to respond quickly and efficiently, but all the while promoting enhanced inter-State cooperation, it isn't entirely unproblematic. First and foremost, a primary issue that needs to be considered is the cost. Financial burden is generally categorized into 'common cost' and 'individual cost' for each participating battlegroup. Common cost, organized under the *Athena* mechanism, refers to financially maintaining operational headquarters, local administration, transportation within the Operational Headquarters (OHQ) and various other necessary infrastructures. Whilst the aspects related to individual costs usually deals with things such as transport of troops from the home country to the area of operations as well as other remaining costs related to 'stand-by' operations (at least one EUBG must be on constant stand-by or call for 6 month period)⁹⁵. Unfortunately the costs jointly shared comprise a far smaller percentage of overall outlay, making it difficult for some Member States to become framework nations or even join as a participating country⁹⁶. Furthermore, the concept of EUBGs although initially received with great enthusiasm has experienced a downturn. The already substantial financial burden coupled with, especially in recent years, a financial crisis and austerity measures, that much further poses a challenge to the EUBG roster, especially since full operational capability (FOC) has already been implanted for several years, thus far not a single battlegroup has ever been deployed⁹⁷. Undoubtedly, the future and viability of EUBGs will be in part contingent upon the relationship between adhered costs and the frequency and necessity for such rapid response units to be maintained within the framework of EU's Common Security and Defense Policy.

⁹⁵ M. Hatzigeorgopoulos, "The Role of EU Battlegroups for European Defence", *European Security Review*, no. 56 (2012), p.2

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 3.

Visegrad Battlegroup as a tool toward enhanced regional military defense partnership: A conceptual introduction.

On May 20, 2012 a NATO summit meeting between Heads of State and Government took place in Chicago, United States. Although the convention covered an extensive array of issues in regards to defense and security, one aspect is of particular significance in regards to the overall concept of EUBG and more specifically, the newly formed Visegrad Battlegroup. Within the framework of NATO Forces 2020 - a new Strategic Concept between now until 2020 that places a fresh new look on the coalition's plans, procedures, missions and concerns, the Alliance once again brought to the forefront the three-pillar approach called Smart Defense, or SD. The concept of SD is particularly unique because at its core lies the insistence and promotion of multinational collaborations and a renewed culture of cooperation among Member States in the area of development and deployment of military capabilities. Furthermore, this approach is at the heart of what is referred to as Connected Forces Initiative or CFI and it essentially calls for increased interoperability and sharing of military capabilities, all the while enhancing multinational cooperation among participating States⁹⁸. The Smart Defense, as previously mentioned, outlines three pillars: prioritization, specialization and collaboration. All of these elements are of particular importance in our discussion of EUBGs, with a particular emphasis being places on collaboration, since the concept of battlegroups is fundamentally born out of a cooperative way of thinking about defense and security. The Visegrad Battlegroup is a salutary example of theory put into practice, within the framework of CFI and Smart Defense. During the Alliance summit, the *"decision of Allies to take forward specific multinational projects, including for better protection of our forces, better surveillance and better training . . . deliver[ing] improved operational effectiveness, economies of scale, and closer connections between our forces"* were not only welcomed but highly encouraged⁹⁹.

Since EUBGs by the very nature are collaborative projects, it is worth investigating what factors influence whether such collaborations are actually efficient and most importantly auspicious in the long term. After all, just because any extensive venture is based upon mutual cooperation, does not automatically guarantee success, in fact some experts have pointed out that "collaboration as such is no panacea; if not approached carefully; it can be an expensive

⁹⁸ M. Mizera and P. Macko, "NATO Forces 2020: The Role of Connected Forces Initiative", *Center for North Atlantic Affairs Policy Papers*, no.6 (2014), p.1

⁹⁹ "Summit Declaration on Defense Capabilities", *North Atlantic Treaty Organization Online*, 20 May 2012, at http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_87594.htm?mode=pressrelease, 21 July 2014.

failure”¹⁰⁰. According to supplemental research conducted by various experts at the Central Institute of Policy Research, in order for a lucrative and lasting partnership to take place, several key criteria must be met¹⁰¹:

- **Similarity of strategic culture:** when Member States decide to join forces on collaborative projects, they should foremost try to incorporate those countries who possess comparable views. A like-minded approach is an attribute that can go a long way, especially when it involves the pooling of resources in deployment-type operations. Often, as in the case of the French and German battlegroups, where disagreements over various aspects of deployment operations led to a complete stall in deployment.
- **Trust and Solidarity:** These factors are especially important, because the bottom-line is that despite the promises and military capabilities of the Member States involved, in the most crucial moments, countries can rest assured that their allies will not be left abandoned without support. Mutual mistrust can also often lead to unnecessary financial loss, because participating countries may focus on other internal defense alternatives, rather than focusing on pooling of resources and eliminating unnecessary costs. Simply put, if any relationship is not based on solid trust, it's doomed for inevitable failure.
- **Forces of similar size and quality:** Asymmetry in size and quality between cooperating Member States can be dangerous because those countries who possess better and bigger military capabilities can overshadow their partners in areas such as decision-making or contributions for example. Moreover, there is a possibility that such unbalance can lead to one side dominating the other, which naturally is not a favorable ingredient in any joint venture. Generally speaking, partners usually want to engage with other partners who possess similar level of either military capability or resources. Nobody wants to be the weaker or less capable in any setting.

¹⁰⁰ J. Bátora et al., “DAV4 Full Report: Towards a deeper Visegrad Defense Partnership”, *Central European Policy Institute Policy Paper*, 15 November 2012, at <http://www.cepolicy.org/publications/dav4-full-report-towards-deeper-visegrad-defence-partnership>, 21 July 2014.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

- **Clarity of intentions:** Different reasons for joining a collaborative partnership such as a EUBG can of course lead to different conclusion. Consequently, for cooperation among Member States to be successful, expectations and desired outcomes must be transparent and forthcoming from the onset of the project. If a country joins a battlegroup in order to enhance EU integration, while another joins to cut defense costs, these discrepancies can potentially lead to misunderstandings. And misunderstanding often end in severing of networks. Any joint venture, big or small, brings forth the promise of mutual gains, benefits and rewards, but it also entails significant initial costs and risks, therefore each partner must join a collaborative partnership with precise and outlined expectations and of course must feel satisfied, at least to an extent, in order for the relationship to flourish long term.

Although the aforementioned set of criteria is not meant to be all encompassing, but it should certainly be taken under serious consideration when entering into collaborative partnerships, especially when pooling of resources is involved. More importantly, because the most viable collaborations are in fact based on the outlined factors, especially trust, cross-border defense initiatives such as EUBG should in fact be formulated regionally. In this context, the most recent such regional defense partnership to be created is the Visegrad Battlegroup. Moreover, because this joint venture is in its infancy stages, it is yet virtually impossible to predict its success or failure. Consequently, in an attempt to scrupulously evaluate the feasibility of this collaboration between the four Visegrad countries, the author will discuss the nature of this unique regional network of countries in the framework of the aforesaid criteria. However, before such an attempt will be made, a brief conceptual introduction of the V4 Battlegroup is in order.

The Visegrad Group (V4) consisting of four countries- Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and Czech Republic, have a long-standing history of collaboration and mutual cooperation on various issues, prior to their decision to form a regional defense partnership. The V4 countries are currently engaged in areas such as cultural dialogue, education, youth exchange, cross-border scientific and mobility projects, as well as various grant programs through its International Visegrad Fund. Considering the established record of successful and long-standing cooperation, extending it to include defense only seems like a next logical choice. The Heads of State of all four V4 seemed to agree that enhanced defense partnership is in fact the right path for several reasons. Consequently, in May 2012, after several years of

negotiations and talks on the matter, the Polish, Hungarian, Slovakian and Czech Ministers of Defense firmly committed their participation of their respective countries in creating a Visegrad Battlegroup. The announcement should not come as a great surprise, in light of the general consensus, in particular within the SD framework outlined by NATO, that a more bottom-up close knit regional defense collaborations should become of greater interest to EU Member States. Moreover, as previously mentioned, the financial crisis in the last few years also impacted the economies of all four Visegrad countries, undeniably declining their defense budgets, which once again reinforces the notion that pooling of resources is a the way to go, especially within an environment of established trust and successful previous cooperation between the four Central European countries. In addition, all four Visegrad countries share similar political and historical ties with regards to their connection to the Soviet Union- something that many other European Member States will never truly understand. And perhaps, in light of recent tribulations with Russia on the international arena, who is geographically near and irrefutably a force to reckon with, the tightening of defense cooperation between these close neighbors and allies seems that much more justified. The Russian resurgence in the post-Soviet periphery, especially in light of the ongoing Ukrainian conflict in particular, cannot be discounted as yet another motive for the V4 project. In fact, interesting enough, the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Poland, Mieczysław Cieniuch disclosed at a press conference in Sopot back in 2013, that Ukraine will eventually be invited to join¹⁰². All countries have common borders and share a vested interest in Ukraine. The Visegrad Battlegroup is designed for rapid military operations, including interventions in conflict area, which can be of particular interest to Ukraine in light of its troubles with Russia in recent months. Furthermore, Ukraine signed the provisions of the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement just this past March, which is suppose to promote its steady convergence within the CSDP framework over time, making the country an informal associate NATO member¹⁰³.

An enhanced Central European cooperation has been a Visegrad staple for a long time, and the concept of a smaller bottom-up defense partnership like the V4 Battlegroup isn't a

¹⁰² "Ukraine will be invited to join the Visegrad Battlegroup", *UKRINFORM*, 18 April 2013, at http://www.ukrinform.ua/eng/news/ukraine_will_be_invited_to_visegrad_battlegroup_302101, 22 July 2014.

¹⁰³ A. Akulov, "LITPOLUKRBRIG: Another EU and NATO Combat Unit Created Against Russia to Be Joined by Ukraine", *Strategic Cultural Foundation Online Journal*, 7 July 2014, at <http://www.strategic-culture.org/pview/2014/07/17/litpolukrbrig-another-eu-and-nato-combat-unit-created-against-russia-to-be-joined-by-ukraine.html>, 22 July 2014.

new concept either; the French-British defense treaties of 2010, or the Benelux and Nordic Battlegroups, or even the recently reestablished Weimar Triangle are just a few examples of such regional joint ventures. More importantly, the V4 Battlegroup can be seen as a symbol of strong commitment to not only inter-State cooperation but their commitment to European defense and security cooperation both with the European Union and NATO. The V4 defense cooperation is yet another tool in articulating possible mutual collaborations on all relevant fora.

The Visegrad Battlegroup (V4BG) will for the most retain the same structure as other existing EUBGs. It will contribute to expanding the military capabilities to defend their homelands as well as contribute to the various EU and NATO operations. Poland is the framework nation and will consequently assume leadership, which can be a benefit considering that out of all the V4 countries, Poland has for example the closest ties with the US putting the V4 BG at an advantage with regards to access to resources and training. Although its FOC isn't scheduled until 2018 and the operational details may be subject to change until then, the rapid response unit will be approximately 2-500 strong¹⁰⁴. The V4 BG will not be part of NATO command, although the military exercises which are scheduled to begin in 2015 will be within NATO's Connected Forces Initiative (CFI). Prior to being ready for the six-month 'stand-by' period by 2016, the battlegroup will have to foremost sign various accords, such as the memorandum of understanding and technical agreements as well as the SOFA agreements¹⁰⁵.

With regards to venues for subsequent training, this remains to be seen, although the possibility of cooperation within the Multinational Corps North-East in Szczecin, Poland (MNC-NE) will be not be excluded in order to contribute to the implementation of the CFI¹⁰⁶. Furthermore, the V4 BG contribution will also include, but not be limited to the following¹⁰⁷:

- **Chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear defense (CBRND)**
- **Common Logistics**

¹⁰⁴ M. Šuplata, "Visegrad Battlegroup: Building new capabilities for the region", *Central European Policy Institute Policy Brief*, 17 April 2013, at <http://www.cepolicy.org/publications/visegrad-battlegroup-building-new-capabilities-region>, 23 July 2014.

¹⁰⁵ J. Bátorá et al., "DAV4 Full Report: Towards a deeper Visegrad Defense Partnership"...

¹⁰⁶ "Joint statement for the V4 ministers of defense", *Visegrad Group Online*, 4 June 2013, at <http://www.visegradgroup.eu/documents/official-statements/joint-statement-of-the>, 22 July 2014.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

- **Countering Cyber Threats**
- **Armament Cooperation**
- **Air and Missile Defense**

Regardless of how ambitious and salutary this new enhanced cooperation might be it is nonetheless important to attempt to analyze the feasibility of this project in years to come. And to do that, we will revert back to the set of criteria previously mentioned as a guide for subsequent discussion. The first important element the experts at the Central Institute for Policy Research have outlined is the concept of **similarity of strategic culture**. Although there is a difference between cooperation within a political domain and a defense partnership, the V4 countries, nonetheless have had a steady and sound record of successful projects and like-minded views on variety of issues. If analyzed in the context of past experience, it seems that these allies are a natural solution for one another. They have shared a similar strategic approach with their mutual support in their respective efforts to join the European Union and NATO. Furthermore, they have retained their steadfast support of each other when faced with challenges or problems within both organization, strategically developing their positions and views on various issues. They have engaged in a large variety of political, cultural and even military projects, and continue to muster enough will to enhance their cooperation that much more. In light of US slow but steady disengagement from European security and its shift from Europe to Asia, the Visegrad countries' strategic calculations are that much more interconnected and therefore defined within the proposed V4 BG. They realize that up until now, their defense and security has primarily relied upon the support of the US and more militarily capable European Member States. However, in light of US slow retrieval and the financial crisis causing deep cuts in military spending of many Western European countries, the need to reinforce their collaboration to include defense and tighten regional cooperation that much further is only the next logical step.

The second factor to be analyzed is the concept of **trust and solidarity**. This particular element should probably be the easiest to defend, for historically, all four countries have enjoyed a deeply sound, mutually supportive and genuinely healthy relationship over the years.. Furthermore, there are always differences in opinions, but it's their ability to work through these differences and remain committed to enhanced cooperation that speaks volumes. Foremost, all countries, as already mentioned, share a historical and political past that reinforces their mutual understanding of one another. There are of course some concerns that need to be addressed if the assessment can be deemed fair. One potential problem might

be the notion of unintentional superiority of one country over the rest. This specifically brings to mind the dynamic between Poland and the remaining three Visegrad allies. Poland, as already mentioned, will assume leadership over the battlegroup, and will also contribute the most in regards to troops, military capabilities, resources etc., than the remaining three. In addition, Poland's economy is considerably stronger than that of, for example, Slovakia. Although based upon past experience, generally speaking, all partners dealt with their deficiencies and arising issues with a lot of diplomacy and effective cooperation, these side-line inadequacies or inequalities might nonetheless be potentially a source of contempt. To be fair, there have been incidents of previous failures that created some tension between the V4 countries, such as the unsuccessful attempts to modernize the Mi24 helicopters and T-72 tanks, which eventually led to dissolution of cooperation on the matter and a pursuit of national solutions¹⁰⁸. Certainly, disagreements must be accounted for, but the notion of trust and solidarity must also be based upon transparency. Regardless of failures and unintentional setbacks, the V4 countries must be absolutely clear about their intentions, their expectations and remain steadfast in their support for one another. No matter how ambitious or potentially successful the venture might be, if the partners do not fully support and rely on each other, the project is doomed to fail.

The notion of unintentional superiority over the other might also be the basis of the third factor in the assessing the feasibility of the partnership based upon **forces of similar size and quality**. This particular issue once again pins Poland against the remaining three. The difference between military capabilities, troops, resources and equipment is incomparable. To illustrate this point and simplify the vast amount of factors considered when talking about a country's military capability in comparison to others, please refer to the table below. The following information was provided by Global Firepower (GFP), an analytical military power ranking system that uses a broad spectrum of factors to determine a Power Index (judged on a perfect score of 0.000), which symbolizes a country's military capability and strength¹⁰⁹.

¹⁰⁸ J. Bátorá et al., "DAV4 Full Report: Towards a deeper Visegrad Defense Partnership"...

¹⁰⁹ "The influence of past Soviet ties are still apparent in the modern Polish army, though dwindling with each passing decade", *Global Firepower Online*, 27 March, 2014, at http://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.asp?country_id=poland, 24 July 2014.

	POLAND	HUNGARY	SLOVAKIA	CZECH REP.
	Rank: 18/106	Rank: 61/106	Rank: 71/106	Rank: 30/106
	Pwrindx: 0.7565	Pwrindx: 1.7148	Pwrindx: 2.1745	Pwrindx: 1.1656
Manpower				
-Population	38,383,8098	9,937,470	5,488,339	10,162,921
-Avail Manpower	18,830,448	4,640,516	2,775,207	4,914,460
- Fit for Service	15,583,917	3,800,017	2,295,493	4,061,106
-Active Reserve	515,000	52,000	0	11,000
Land Systems				
-Tanks	1,063	155	30	123
-AFVs*	3,110	1,508	530	586
-SPGs*	443	0	16	97
-Towed Artillery	257	30	26	85
-MLRS*	240	65	26	0
Naval Power				
-Naval Strength	83	-N/A-	-N/A-	-N/A-
-Aircraft Carrier	0	-N/A-	-N/A-	-N/A-

-Frigates	2	-N/A-	-N/A-	-N/A-
-Destroyers	0	-N/A-	-N/A-	-N/A-
-Corvettes	1	-N/A-	-N/A-	-N/A-
-Submarines	5	-N/A-	-N/A-	-N/A-
-CDC*	3	-N/A-	-N/A-	-N/A-
-Mine Warfare	19	-N/A-	-N/A-	-N/A-
Resources				
	34,200bbl/day	21,500bbl/day	4,100 bbl/day	10,010 bbl/day
-Oil Production	565,000bbl/day	92,000bbl/day	85,000 bbl/day	200,000bbl/day
-Oil Consumption				
-Oil Reserve	156,500,000bbl/day	27,320,000bbl/d	9,000,000 bbl/day	15,000,000bbl/day
Air Power				
-Total Aircraft	475	30	49	109
-Fighters	67	12	12	12
-Fixed Wing Attack Aircraft	103	12	12	31
-Transport Aircraft	252	16	27	10
-Trainer Aircraft	82	2	9	14

-Helicopters	263	12	17	54
-Attack Helicopters	29	0	0	15
Logistics				
-Labor Force	18,170,000	4,257,000	2,724,000	5,404,000
-Merchant Marine Strength	9	0	11	1
-Port/Terminals	4	6	2	3
-Roadways	423,997	199,567	43,916	130,671
-Railways	19,428	8,057	3,622	9,469
-Airports	126	41	35	128
Financial (\$)				
-Defense Budget	9,360,000,000	1,040,000,000	1,025,000,000	2,220,000,000
-External Debt	364,200,000,000	169,300,000,000	68,440,000,000	101,000,000,000
-Gold Reserve	108,900,000,000	44,670,000,000	2,519,000,000	44,880,000,000
-P.P.P*	792,400,000,000	193,600,000,000	130,500,000,000	291,700,000,000

*AFV- Armored Fighting Vehicles

*SPG-Self Propelled Guns

*MLRS- Multiple Launch Rocket Systems

***CDC- Coastal Defense Craft**

***PPP-Purchasing Power Parity**

The information, although extensive, is clearly affirming the inequality with regards to capabilities, resources, and finances between the four allies, underlying the possibility, however unlikely, that these circumstances could negatively affect the partnership in years to come. When the Visegrad Group was first formed, the structural differences were not so drastic, with military arsenals of comparable age and quality. These structural differences are considerably different decades later, which may also explain why Poland is also simultaneously seeking defense partnerships outside of V4, with Germany for example, or with the Weimar Triangle. Poland's steady economic growth, expanded cooperation with more powerful European countries can certainly enhance the standing of the Visegrad countries. In addition, as previously mentioned a potential backlash could be this sense of unintentional superiority stemming from Poland's leading role, but it can also have a completely different potential result: free-loading. In other words, the fact that one member is more capable, therefore forced to do more, to contribute more can alter the dynamic where the remaining three might ignore their respective responsibilities to fair and equal burden-sharing and rely more their more willing and more connected Polish partner.

On the other hand, although the numbers certainly present a potential risk, at the present moment there is no substantial evidence or assumption that the V4 BG could be negatively affected. In fact, the counter argument could be based on the very fact that the knowledge of these inequalities was certainly known before the countries signed an agreement on forming a defense partnership, once again reinforcing their close ties, willingness to enhance further cooperation and their overall good standing with one another. Furthermore, Poland is the only partner who is geographically at an advantage and therefore possesses naval capabilities, which automatically rules out cooperation in this matter. Lastly, in order to secure healthy burden-sharing amongst all four partners, the defense ministers have promised to gradually increase military spending by allocating approximately 2% of their GDP for modernization projects¹¹⁰.

¹¹⁰ "Visegrad countries may turn EU battlegroup into permanent V4 Rapid Reaction Force", *Atlantic Council Organization Online*, 3 July 2014 at <http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/natosource/visegrad-countries-may-turn-eu-battlegroup-into-permanent-v4-rapid-reaction-force>, 25 July 2014.

These inequalities of capabilities, manpower and particularly the vast differences in defense budgets of all four countries, brings us to the fourth and last factor in the V4 cooperation assessment- **the clarity of intentions**. With regards to this particular element, financial situations with respect to military spending plays a crucial role, because unlike Poland, the remaining three economies have been severely hit by the financial crisis in recent years, considerably shrinking their budgets. Enhanced cooperation can potentially mean the benefit of having the best of both worlds: enhancing their security and defense, whilst saving on costs due to sharing of resources. Why is this scenario potentially problematic within the framework of the V4 defense partnership? Simply put, for an economy that is doing relatively well, with regards to Poland for example, the goal might be very well different than that of the remaining three whose primary intention is a 'budgetary crisis management' based solely upon capability acquisition that otherwise would not be attainable due to high costs or access to necessary channels¹¹¹. Furthermore, Poland being in a position of having a considerably large and well functioning defense, in comparison to its other three allies, might want to strengthen and reinforce larger partners such as NATO or EU as a capability contributor and therefore increase its position as a regional military leader. The remaining three countries within the Visegrad Group, lacking the technical, logistical, and financial means, might view their collaboration within the partnership alongside Poland, as a means to insure these institutions (NATO, EU) simply as their security guarantors. This is where the clear intentions of each participating Member State are absolutely vital, because opaque intentions and expectations can lead to misunderstandings; and misunderstanding often give way to disagreements and severance of ties.

Concluding remarks: Is V4 BG simply an enhanced regional political project or an effective military tool?

A general concept of any enhanced cooperation, whether political, economic or military is almost always seen as an asset. With regards to the regional defense cooperation project on behalf of the Visegrad countries, the opinions vary from optimistic and salutary to highly critical and skeptical. For those whose stance on the newly developed V4 Battlegroup is enthusiastic, the partnership is an opportunity to enhance regional capabilities, to promote

¹¹¹ J. Bátorá et al., "DAV4 Full Report: Towards a deeper Visegrad Defense Partnership"...

inter-State cooperation, reinforce and synchronize with existing partnerships such as NATO and EU, and endorse future projects. Regardless of some of the challenges raised in this article, proponents would argue that past record of collaborations and the solid nature of the relationship between the Visegrad countries serve as a solidifying rubber-stamp that this new joint venture will in fact flourish. In addition, keeping in mind historical and geographical considerations of all four countries, the potential threat of Russian hegemony in the region is a considerable issue (especially with the Ukrainian conflict in full swing), in comparison to other Western European Member States, therefore making a focused regional defense group a logical step in reinforcing mutual security. Furthermore, Poland as a leading framework nation, has considerable influence in promoting V4 interests with closer ties to the United States for example, allowing for smaller regional actors to have access to better training, equipment and opportunities to join multinational projects.

The skeptical audience however is far larger. To some experts, the V4 battlegroup, although ambitious in theory, in practice presents far too many challenges and potential problems to give a high mark to the joint venture. Namely, the fact that the battlegroup has yet to be tested in real-life setting can leave room for doubt. The counter-argument of course can be that this isn't the first BG and there is already a considerable amount of rapid response units which have engaged in military operations. However, their track record has not been entirely without just-cause for criticism. For example, back in 2008 the Nordic battlegroup was preparing to deploy to Chad and Central African Republic to join an EU stabilizing mission, but was unable to do so because no other European country was willing to back up the battlegroup with additional troops. This eventually led to EU being forced to convene necessary support through traditional means, by creating an *ad hoc* group of voluntary contributions from EU Member States, which not only took much more time, but rendered the rapid response unit useless and in essence ineffective¹¹². The V4 partnership, as argued, should not replace a comprehensive Europe-wide defense cooperation, which proponents would respond that the project is not meant to exclude existing or other defense collaborations with the EU or NATO for example, but simply *supplement* them on a more focus, regional level. It is important to point however, that the V4 BG should synchronize training with EU and NATO Response Force (NRF) to secure a harmonized system of standards.

¹¹² T. Weiss, "Visegrad Battlegroup: A flagship that should not substitute for real defense cooperation", *V4 Revue*, 4 June 2012 at <http://visegradrevue.eu/?p=806>, 25 July 2014.

Other potential obstacles to consider might include overcoming the complicated and often challenging legal barriers in securing operability. This of course is an issue that must be addressed internally at a national decision-making level. External ventures require internal support not only within governmental structures but with the general public. Civil-military interaction is very important for the long term feasibility of any EUBG, therefore setting up of permanent civil-military EU planning structures is deemed necessary¹¹³.

Lastly, the concept behind the EU Battlegroups, whether it being the newly created Visegrad Battlegroup or remaining others is to foremost transform national defense structures by enhancing capabilities, enhance inter-State cooperation both on a regional and international level, and to provide an effective, rapid response to a variety of critical situations. The success of these ambitious endeavors remains to be seen of course. In the words of Gustav Lindstrom, it is “the first few years post-FOC will be vital to gauge whether or not the EU BGs will become an active part of the ESDP crisis management toolbox”¹¹⁴. In the case of the V4 BG, there is still few years left to test the waters and prove itself to an inquisitive audience.

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¹¹³ M. Hatzigeorgopoulos, “The Role of EU Battlegroups for European Defence”..., p.6.

¹¹⁴ G. Lindstrom, “Enter the EU Battle Groups”...,p.64.

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Annex

Abbreviations

CBRND- Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear defense

CFI- Connected Forces Initiative

CFSP-Common Foreign and Security Policy

CSDP- Common Security and Defense Policy

ESDP- European Security and Defense Policy

EU- European Union

EDA- European Defense Agency

ESS- European Security Strategy

EUBG- European Union Battle Groups

FOC- Fully operational capability

GFP- Global Firepower

HQ- Headquarters

NATO- North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NRF- NATO Response Force

OHQ- Operational Headquarters

PSCD- Permanent Structure Cooperation in Defense

SD- Smart Defense

V4 BG- Visegrad Battlegroup

WEU- Western European Union



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THE UNIFICATION OF CONFLICT OF LAW RULES IN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS INFLUENCE ON PRIVATE INTERNATIONAL LAW IN THE COUNTRIES OF THE VISEGRÁD GROUP

The unification of private international law within the European Union (EU) has been a long-lasting process that is closely connected with the creation of the single European market. The aim of this process is to create homogenous conflict of laws rules in certain matters, which are considered essential for proper functioning of the single market.

This unification process has had a clear influence on the national regulations of the EU member states. To demonstrate this, the legal systems of four EU member states will be analyzed: Czech, Hungary, Slovakia and Poland. These countries show many similarities – they belong to so-called “former soviet sphere”, they all went through similar political and economic transformation, and they joined the EU at the same time. Also, they all have codifications of private international law, that were created in the 1960s or 1970s – Czechoslovak codification in 1963¹¹⁵, Polish in 1965¹¹⁶, and Hungarian in 1979.¹¹⁷ Before they can be analyzed in the context of the EU law, it is necessary to describe what the EU (and earlier, the European Economic Community – EEC) has done in the field of private international law so far.

The Treaty of Rome¹¹⁸ (1957) did not grant competence to the EEC in the area of private law international. Although it contained a provision that concerned “the simplification

¹¹⁵Private International Law and Procedure Act of 4 December 1963 (sk. *Zákon o medzinárodnom práve súkromnom a procesnom*), Predpis č. 97/1963 Zb.

¹¹⁶Private International Law Act of 12 November 1965 (pol. *Ustawa – Prawo prywatne międzynarodowe*), Dz. U. z 1965 r. Nr 46, poz.

¹¹⁷Legislative Decree No. 13 on Private International Law of 31 May 1979 (hu. *Törvényerejű rendelet a nemzetközi magánjogról*), nr 33/1979.

¹¹⁸The Treaty establishing the European Economic Community signed on 25 March 1957. The original version of the Treaty is available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/>.

of formalities governing the reciprocal recognition and enforcement of judgments of courts or tribunals and of arbitration awards,” this goal was supposed to be achieved by the member states through the conclusion of international agreements. Furthermore, this provision related only to judicial cooperation, and thus unification of the rules of jurisdiction and the rules of recognition and enforcement of judgments. It could not, however, be treated as the legal basis for the adoption of acts unifying conflict of laws rules.¹¹⁹ Because of that, the only legal act that had been adopted in this field before the Treaty of Maastricht came into force, the Convention on the Law Applicable to Contractual Obligations¹²⁰, has not been considered as part of the EC law (now, the EU law).

The Treaty of Maastricht¹²¹ (1992) brought about a large change in the competence of the EEC in the field of private international law and international civil procedure. It created the European Union, which was based on three pillars. The third pillar included cooperation in the field of Justice and Home Affairs at that time. Article K. 1 of the original version of the TEU provided that powers to adopt acts in the third pillar were granted to the European Commission acting jointly with the member states. In practice, it turned out that such a cooperation mechanism was completely ineffective, because it required conducting negotiations at the international level, which included not only the member states, but also the European Commission. Therefore, it was even more complicated and time-consuming than in the case of traditional international agreements. As a result of the above, not a single measure in the field of private international law was adopted between 1993 and 1999.

The turning point for the process of unification of the conflict of laws rules within the EC was 1 May 1999, when the Treaty of Amsterdam¹²² entered into force. The Treaty divided the matters encompassed by the third pillar into two areas: 1) Judicial Cooperation in Civil Matters and 2) Police and Judicial Cooperation in Criminal Matters. While the first area was transferred to the first pillar, the second remained in the third pillar. This change had far-reaching consequences in regard to the competence of the EU in the field of private international law. The first pillar of the EU had the broadest powers, which included the competence to issue legally binding acts such as regulations, directives, and decisions.

¹¹⁹F. Pocar, The “Communitarization” of Private International Law and its Impact on the External Relations of the European Union, in: A. Malatesta, S. Bariatti, F. Pocar (ed.), *The External Dimension of EC Private International Law in Family and Succession Matters*, Padova, 2008, pp. 4-5.

¹²⁰Convention on the Law applicable to Contractual Obligations, opened for signature in Rome on 19 June 1980, OJ L 266, 9.10.1980 (original version), OJ C 169, 8.7.2005 (consolidated version).

¹²¹The *Treaty on European Union (TEU)* signed on 7 February 1992. The original version of the Treaty is available at <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/>.

¹²²Treaty of Amsterdam amending the Treaty of the European Union, the Treaties establishing the European Communities and certain related acts, signed on 2 October 1997, OJ C 340, 10.11.1997.

Moreover, in most of the areas encompassed by the first pillar EU has exclusive competence, which practically speaking, means a lack of action taken by the member states. Article 65 b) has been added to the EC Treaty, under which the EU Council was empowered to adopt “measures promoting the compatibility of the rules applicable in the member states concerning the conflict of laws and of jurisdiction.” According to the Treaty of Amsterdam, the procedure for their adoption was subject to a gradual evolution: a five-year transition period was established (from 1 May 1999 to 1 May 2004), during which acts regulating Judicial Cooperation in Civil Matters were to be adopted by the Council unanimously, on a proposal from the European Commission or a member state and after consulting the European Parliament. After this period the powers of the EU did not change – it could still take legal measures in such matters unanimously, and after consulting the Parliament, but the Commission gained the exclusive right of legislative initiative in this area. The Commission was supposed to “examine any request made by a member state,” but the final decision on the initiation of the legislative process belonged to the Commission, which in practice meant a significant reduction of the competence of the member states.

The Treaty of Nice (2001) did not bring any major changes in the competence of the EU to issue legal acts in the field of private international law. The co-decision procedure applied to most of the measures in that field (previously they were adopted through the consultation procedure with the European Parliament). Only measures concerning family law are still adopted unanimously by the EU Council after consulting the European Parliament.

Currently, after the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon¹²³ (2009), provisions relating to Judicial Cooperation in Civil Matters are dealt with in Chapter 3 of the Treaty on the functioning of the European Union (TFEU)¹²⁴. Article 81 determines the competence of the EU in this matter. Article 81.1 TFEU includes an introductory statement saying that “the Union shall develop judicial cooperation in civil matters having cross-border implications, based on the principle of mutual recognition of judgments and of decisions in extrajudicial cases,” which may include “the adoption of measures for the approximation of the laws and regulations of the member states.” Next, Article 81.2 TFEU states that such measures will be adopted through the ordinary legislative procedure, which involves the EU Council and the European Parliament. Article 81.3 TFEU provides for a different procedure relating to measures concerning family law with cross-border implications. According to this provision,

¹²³Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community, signed on 13 December 2007, OJ C 306, 17.12.2007.

¹²⁴**Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, OJ C 326, 26.10.2012 (consolidated version).**

such measures are adopted in a special legislative procedure in which the EU Council decides unanimously, after consulting the European Parliament. Also, there is a mechanism that allows EU Council to change this procedure into the ordinary legislative procedure. To that end, the European Commission must draw up a proposal, which determines the issues belonging to family law that would be covered by the ordinary legislative procedure. This request is then forwarded to the national parliaments of the member states. If none of them notifies the EU institutions of any objections within six months, the request goes to the EU Council, which makes a final decision about changing the procedure.¹²⁵

As was already mentioned, the only act adopted before the Treaty of Amsterdam that included the conflict of laws rules was the Convention on the Law Applicable to Contractual Obligations (so called “*the Rome Convention*”). It was signed on 19 June 1980 and entered into force in 1991. Along with the Convention, signatory countries signed a joint declaration, which stated that “having regard to the contribution of the Convention on the law applicable to contractual obligations to the unification of choice of law rules within the European Communities,” the signatory states “express the view that any state which becomes a member of the European Communities should accede to this Convention.”¹²⁶ In order to satisfy this requirement, the new member states that joined the EU in 2004, including the Visegrád Four, signed the special convention on the accession to the Rome Convention¹²⁷. By 1 August 2007, the Rome Convention came into force for ten new member states.¹²⁸

In order to maximize the use of the competence given to the EU, in 2004 the European Council set a new, five-year course called The Hague Program to strengthen freedom, security, and justice within the European Union¹²⁹. The Program provided for adoption of six regulations on: 1) contractual obligations, 2) non-contractual obligations, 3) maintenance obligations, 4) succession, 5) matrimonial property regimes, and 6) divorce. These regulations

¹²⁵This decision is made in the same manner in which measures in the field of family law are adopted – unanimously, after consulting the European Parliament.

¹²⁶Since the Convention was not the part of the EC law (now: the EU law), entering in to force of an accession treaty would not be sufficient to make it binding.

¹²⁷**Convention on the accession of the Czech Republic, the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Cyprus, the Republic of Latvia, the Republic of Lithuania, the Republic of Hungary, the Republic of Malta, the Republic of Poland, the Republic of Slovenia and the Slovak Republic to the Convention on the law applicable to contractual obligations opened for signature in Rome on 19 June 1980, OJ C 169, 8.7.2005.**

¹²⁸For Hungary on 1 June 2006, for the Czech Republic on 1 July 2006, for Slovakia on 1 August 2006, and for Poland on 1 August 2007.

¹²⁹OJ C 53, 3.5.2005.

were designed to unify the national conflict of laws rules by the end of 2011. Unfortunately, it turned out to be too short a period, so the goal was only partially achieved.

So far five regulations have been adopted: 1) Regulation No 864/2007 on the law applicable to *non-contractual obligations* (so-called “*Rome II*”)¹³⁰, 2) Regulation No 593/2008 on the law applicable to contractual obligations (so-called “*Rome I*”)¹³¹, 3) Regulation No 4/2009 on maintenance obligations¹³², 4) Regulation No 650/2012 on succession matters¹³³, and 5) Regulation No 1259/2010 on implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the law applicable to divorce and legal separation¹³⁴. The sixth regulation on the law applicable to matrimonial property regimes is still in the project phase. Because of the disparities that exist in this matter among the member states, the project was divided into two separate projects: the regulation on matrimonial property regimes¹³⁵ and the regulation on the property consequences of registered partnerships¹³⁶. The expected date of completion for the legislative work on those two projects is not known yet.

All above mentioned regulations are part of the EU law, which is supreme over national laws of the member states. In practice it means that after those regulations entered into force, the national provisions on private international law could not be used anymore. This meant a lot of changes, in many aspects, in this area of law within rather a short period of time.

The Visegrád Countries took different approaches to introduce those changes to their legal systems. Hungary and Slovakia opted for keeping their private international law codifications in force, amending them if the need arose¹³⁷, whereas the Czech Republic¹³⁸ and

¹³⁰Regulation (EC) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 11 July 2007 on the law applicable to non-contractual obligations, OJ L 199, 31.7.2007.

¹³¹Regulation (EC) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 June 2008 on the law applicable to contractual obligations, OJ L 177, 4.7.2008.

¹³²Council Regulation (EC) of 18 December 2008 on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition and enforcement of decisions and cooperation in matters relating to maintenance obligations, OJ L 331, 16.12.2009.

¹³³**Regulation (EU) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 July 2012 on jurisdiction, applicable law, recognition and enforcement of decisions and acceptance and enforcement of authentic instruments in matters of succession and on the creation of a European Certificate of Succession, OJ L 201, 27.7.2012.**

¹³⁴Council Regulation (EU) of 20 December 2010 implementing enhanced cooperation in the area of the law applicable to divorce and legal separation, OJ L 343, 29.12.2010.

¹³⁵Proposal for a Council Regulation on jurisdiction, applicable law and the recognition and enforcement of decisions in matters of matrimonial property regimes, COM (2011) 126.

¹³⁶Proposal for a Council Regulation on jurisdiction, applicable law and the recognition and enforcement of decisions regarding the property consequences of registered partnerships, COM (2011) 127.

¹³⁷S. C. Symeonides, *Codifying Choice of Law Around the World: An International Comparative Analysis*, New York, 2014, p. 14.

¹³⁸Private International Law Act of 25 January 2012 (cs. *Zákon o mezinárodním právu soukromém*), Předpis č. 91/2012 Sb.

Poland¹³⁹ decided on creating brand new private international law acts (PIL acts), in accordance with the EU conflict of laws rules.

Despite the chosen method, the EU's recent legislative activity in the private international law area forced the Visegrád Countries to transform their national provisions. Those changes were numerous and diverse according to the particular country, so it would be impossible to present them all in this paper. Because of that only two major tendencies will be described.

Firstly, conflict of laws rules in the EU regulations most frequently use habitual residence as a connecting factor, while it is not common in the private international law acts of Visegrád Countries. Habitual residence did not occur in the Slovak private international law at all until it was introduced by the EU regulations.¹⁴⁰ It was not used in the old Polish PIL Act either, yet it can be found in the new PIL Act, mostly as subsidiary connecting factor, in addition to nationality and domicile.¹⁴¹ An analogous situation can be observed with the old and the new Czech PIL Act. The only country out of the four that used habitual residence as a connecting factor before joining the EU is Hungary, although it has been far less common than other personal connecting factors.

Using the habitual residence as a connecting factor is consistent with the general ideas of the single market and freedom of movement. Since EU citizens are able to migrate to other member state and function there on the same terms as citizens of that state, it is reasonable to “connect” those persons and their activity with the state of residence and its legal system. Of course it cannot be done by the nationality as a connecting factor, because usually such persons do not change their citizenship – in such cases it would be the law of the country of origin that would be applicable, which generally is not a good solution. As for domicile playing the role of the connecting factor, it is said that it could create even more confusion, as it is understood differently in the countries that belong to the common law system and those who represent the continental legal system.¹⁴² Also, member states usually have their own definitions of domicile in their national law, which can be misleading. At the same time habitual residence is a rather new term, which has not had a chance to develop different

¹³⁹Private International Law Act of 4 February 2011 (pol. *Ustawa – Prawo prywatne międzynarodowe*), Dz. U. z 2011 r. Nr 80, poz. 432.

¹⁴⁰E. Júdová, *The Concept of 'Habitual Residence' and Similar Concepts in Slovakian Private International Law*, *Yearbook of Private International Law*, vol. 9 (2007), p. 476.

¹⁴¹M. Pazdan, *Nowa polska ustawa o prawie prywatnym międzynarodowym*, *Państwo i Prawo*, vol. 6 (2011), p. 27.

¹⁴²R. Mańsko, ‘Habitual residence’ as connecting factor in EU civil justice measures. European Parliament Library Briefing no. 2013-427, 22 January 2013. Available online at:<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/>.

meanings in different countries.

Secondly, adopting the EU regulations significantly broadened party autonomy in the private international law of those four countries. The biggest change in this matter can be observed in Polish law: ratifying the Rome Convention allowed parties to make a choice of law for contractual obligations which was not connected with the obligation in any way; adopting the *Rome II* Regulation created the new opportunity to choose law for non-contractual obligations; Regulation No 4/2009 made it possible to choose law for maintenance obligations, and from 17 August 2015, when Regulation No 650/2012 will start to apply, testators will become entitled to make a *choice of law* and determine the law applicable to their *succession*. For the other three countries, EU legislation did not cause such far-reaching changes. For example, adoption of the Rome Convention by Hungary had very little effect on party autonomy in the private international law of contracts, as Hungarian conflict of laws rules allowed parties of a contract to choose their governing law. On the other hand, after signing the Rome Convention, Hungary had to adapt the provisions on the law applicable to consumer contracts and individual employment contracts in order to make them consistent with the conventional regulations.¹⁴³ It is also worth mentioning that Hungary is the only Visegrád State that is bound by Regulation No 1259/2010, as the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia did not decide to join in the enhanced cooperation in the area of law applicable to matrimonial matters. As a result, spouses in Hungary are able to designate the law applicable to divorce and legal separation, choosing between the law of the state where they are habitually resident, the law of the State where they were last habitually resident (in so far as one of them still resides there the law of the state of nationality of either of them or the law of the forum, while in the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovakia spouses are unable to make such a choice and the applicable law is determined by the legislator.

Allowing the choice of law as a remedy for conflicts of laws in commercial and economic relationships has a long tradition. It also makes a lot of sense, since it is party autonomy which plays the main role in those relationships. However in family law and succession law, it is a rather new trend. For most of the time it is met with reluctance by the member states, which are used to precisely regulating which law is applicable, usually by using nationality as a connecting factor. Despite that, such a solution has a huge advantage – when it is hard for member states to agree on some particular conflict of laws rule, choice of

¹⁴³G.P. Palásti, *The Future Impact of the Rome Convention on Hungarian Conflict Rules*, *European Integration Studies*, vol. 3 (2004) , pp. 9-15.

law seems to be a good compromise.¹⁴⁴

The EU legislation on private international law wielded influence over national conflict of laws rules of the member states. The comparison of regulations on private international law in the four Visegrád Countries shows that they significantly differ from each other, even though they were created in almost the same time frame and in the same political reality. Being cognizant of such differences in national law systems of the EU member states is necessary to fully understand the reason why the EU decided to unify the conflict of laws rules in the first place. Moreover, realizing what changes were needed to be made within the national regulations makes it possible to see how challenging this process is and how many advantages have unified legal rules in certain areas of private international law.



¹⁴⁴*Vide* M. Torga, Party Autonomy in Private International Law as a Tool for Converging National Laws, in: The Interaction of National Legal Systems: Convergence or Divergence?, Vilnius, 2013, pp. 351-358.

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The cultural dimensions and differences inside the Visegrad Group

Abstract: The paper focuses on differences between Visegrad group countries' culture based on cultural dimensions presented by Geert Hofstede, Shalom H. Schwartz, Roland Inglehart and Wayne E. Baker. The aim of the paper is to present Visegrad countries as different cultures in spite of their common communistic history and membership in the territory of Eastern-Central Europe. The text comes into existence as a result of the belief that the knowledge of one another may not only have a positive impact by facilitating the communication between citizens in Visegrad countries but also promote knowledge about cultures.

Keywords: intercultural dimensions, diversity, Visegrad countries

Two year ago I conducted a workshops with intercultural competence with very interesting people – county artists, the mayor and officials. One of the participants recounted a story and asked questions. She was a Polish choreographer and a director of a folk dance group. She traveled a lot with her group. She met with different cultures and people and she was not interested in cultural studies. Her focus was on her performances and her group's aims and as a result she met a lot of difficulties. At One point she went also on tourne to Hungary. She was completely sure of the positive results of the tourne and that everything would be ok, but it turned out otherwise, Her dancers encountered communication problems with Hungarian dancers,. It was difficult for her to understand why? – “Both Poles and Hungarians are Slavic people. Everybody emphasized the brotherhood among Poles and Hungarians. Why was it so difficult for my people and the Hungarian dancers to have fun together? – She asked me. I heard very similar situation about Czechs and Slovaks. Quite often, the habits of Visegrad countries are perceived to resemble to each other.

This region is in fact understudied due to its social past. Researchers called citizens of these countries *Homo Sovieticus*. They lived behind the *Iron Curtain* and according to Howard J.

Wiarda¹⁴⁵ (2002) the barrier was “a cultural wall (...) and a socio-psychological wall as well as an economic and strategy one”. Mirosława Marody¹⁴⁶ claims the morality of *homo sovieticus* was undermined by the totalitarian system which made that he/she was full of helplessness with weakened individual responsibility. Piotr Sztompka¹⁴⁷ (2000) called this kind of personality “civilizational incompetence” and he characterizes it by using the qualifications such as lack of the emergence of citizenship, opportunism, blind compliance, reluctance to take decisions, avoidance of personal responsibility and he writes about a syndrome by “prolonged infantilism matched by state paternalism”. Scientists have also written about the deficit of democratic ideas in the *homo sovieticus*’ countries. Furthermore, they believed that it has changed after 2004 when Visegrad countries entered the European Union. It resulted in gradual opening and democratization of these countries. Post-Soviet countries were perceived as individual countries rather than as union of countries. From this point forward, scientists began to talk about the cultural differences between Czechs, Slovaks, Poles and Hungarians. Prior to this the Visegrad region was excluded in the most important research on intercultural differences such as Geert Hofstede’s¹⁴⁸ seminal work (1980) or in Simcha Ronen and Oded Shenkar¹⁴⁹ comparative study of 25 countries, because it remained behind the Iron Curtain. First of all, the conducting of research in this area was limited and the secondly it was perceived that all Soviet countries was in fact similar. It seemed there were no differences between them. More importantly, this point of view was expressed not only by people coming from Western Europe, but by people within Visegrad countries.

The Visegrad countries were also perceived as one Eastern-Central European culture. The term Eastern Europe, as Larry Wolf¹⁵⁰ shows, was introduced in 17th and 18th century and it meant countries underneath Russian hegemonic policies. Poland belonged to Eastern Europe. However, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic belonged to Central Europe. Czesław

¹⁴⁵ H. J. Wiarda, *Defining the borders of the new Europe*, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2393/its_4_164/ai_87025776, 10 April 2010.

¹⁴⁶ M. Marody, “Building a competitive society: challenges for social policy”, in: *Towards a Competitive Society in Central and Eastern Europe: Social Dimensions*, Finland, Vienna 1992.

¹⁴⁷ P. Sztompka, *Civilisation competence: a prerequisite of post-communist transition*, <http://www.friends-partners.org/newfriends/audem/audem92/Sztompka.html>, 12 August 2014.

¹⁴⁸ G. Hofstede, *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind*, London 1990; G. Hofstede, *Cultures’ consequences: International differences in work-related values*, Beverly Hills, 1980; S.H. Schwartz, “Beyond Individualism-Collectivism: New cultural dimensions of values”, in: *Individualism and collectivism: Theory, method and applications*, London 1994.

¹⁴⁹ S. Ronen, O. Shenkar, *Clustering countries on attitudinal dimensions: a review and synthesis*, “Academy of Management Review”, 10 (3) 1985.

¹⁵⁰ L. Wolf, *Inventing Eastern Europe: The Map of Civilization on the Mind of the Enlightenment*, Stanford 1994.

Miłosz¹⁵¹ defined Central Europe (which, according to him, included Baltic States) as an entity between the Soviet Union and Germany. He thus reemerged the idea of Central Europe. Central Europe was perceived as a zone between East and West characterized by common culture and tradition. Central Europe suffered under Soviet totalitarianism and seemed to be deprived of democratic traditions.

The aforementioned facts point at similarities within the cultural framework of Visegrad countries. The term East-Central-Soviet Europe is treated as a cliché and it is used in various times and various places. Meanwhile, research on differences between cultures was conducted. It focused on the postmodern idea to deemphasize similarities but instead focus on and accept existing differences, because in essence it's the differences that are the most important, because they cause diversity. This approach focuses on the idea of cultural relativism - that is, the cognitive attitude which assumes knowledge and understanding of other cultures by their relevant categories and values. This strategy involves the suspension of judgment of another culture according to their own criteria of native culture. Milton J. Bennet writes about ethnorelativism which is in opposition to ethnocentrism. Ethnorelativism means "the experience of one's own beliefs and behaviors as just one organization of reality among many viable possibilities"¹⁵². According to Bennet, the major change in the quality of the experience which he calls the move from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism is linked with the fact people become more inter-culturally competent. "The more ethnorelative worldviews – as Bennet underlines – are ways of seeking cultural difference, either by accepting its importance, by adapting perspective to take it into account, or by integrating the whole concept into definition of identity"¹⁵³. They gain intercultural competence thanks to research, increased knowledge and awareness about cultural diversity.

Modernistic theories were seen as the last cause of perceiving Post-Soviet countries as well as European countries as similar. Roland Inglehart and Wayne E. Baker in their paper *Modernization, Cultural Change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values* underline: "Modernisation theorists from Karl Marx to Daniel Bell have argued that economic development brings pervasive cultural changes. But other, from Max Weber to Samuel Huntington, has claimed that cultural values are on enduring and autonomous influence on

¹⁵¹ C. Miłosz, *The Budapest Round-Table*, "Cross Currents" 1991, p. 18.

¹⁵² Milton J. Bennett, *Becoming Interculturally Competent*, in: J. S. Wurzel (ed.) *Towards multiculturalism: A reader in multicultural education*, ed. by, Newton 1988, p. 62.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 63.

society”¹⁵⁴. In addition they claim: “Well into the twentieth century, modernization was widely viewed as a uniquely Western process that non-Western societies could follow only in so far as they abandoned their traditional cultures and assimilated technologically and morally ‘superior’ Western ways”¹⁵⁵. Then it turned out that the idea of moving toward a uniform, MacWorld is partly an illusion. Three theories compete with each other: theory of globalization, theory of multicultural and trans-culture. All of them illustrate the importance of knowledge about cultural similarities and differences.

Many scientists like Hofstede, Edward T. Hall, Richard R. Gestald, Fons Trompenaars and Charles Hampden-Turner have examined the differences between national cultures and their influence on the communication, relation between culture, attitude of tolerance and solidarity. As Peter B. Smith, Mark F. Peterson and Shalom H. Schwartz underline in their text *Cultural Values, Sources of Guidance, and their Relevance to Managerial Behaviour: A 47-Naion Study*: “Some theorists conceptualize culture as defined by shared meanings assigned by culture members to things and persons around them. This type of definition would include Hofstede’s much-cited phrase, the ‘collective programming of the mind’. Others assert that culture entails not just shared interpretations of behaviors but also actual differences in behavior. For instance, Herskovits favored the much broader conceptualized captured by the phrase “‘the man-made part of the environment’. The attraction of values as the basis for conceptualizing culture is that they can be expressed in a de-contextualized manner”¹⁵⁶. According to Frank Bradley¹⁵⁷ the most influencing factors are: cultural variability, cultural hostility, cultural heterogeneity and cultural interdependence. He suggests these factors influence perception of foreigners and their perception of different cultures as well as communication process. Thanks to the research on Central Europe, Visegrad countries are no longer being perceived as one unison and common cultural mass. The research reflects on the idea of the heterogeneity of Visegrad cultures. For example, the Visegrad countries were omitted by the research conducted by Peter Joseph Foley¹⁵⁸ and Ashleigh Merritt¹⁵⁹. In

¹⁵⁴ R. Inglehart, W. E. Baker *Modernization, Cultural Change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values*, “American Sociological Review” vo. 65, February (2000), p. 19.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Peter B. Smith, Mark F. Peterson and Shalom H. Schwartz in their text titled *Cultural Values, Sources of Guidance, and their Relevance to Managerial Behaviour: A 47-Naion Study*, “Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology” 33 (2002), p. 189, compare to: G. Hofstede, *Cultures*; G. Hofstede, *Cultures’ consequences....*; M.J. Herskovits, *Man and his work: The science of cultural anthropology*, New York 1948.

¹⁵⁷ F. Bradley, *International marketing strategy*, New York 1991.

¹⁵⁸ P. J. Foley, *An examination of the dimensions of cross-cultural differences in work-related attitudes*, Georgia 1992.

certain Visegrad countries, there was research conducted by Felix C. Brodbeck¹⁶⁰ (Poland, the Czech Republic), The GLOBE Study of 62 Societies (Poland), Peter B. Smith and Matthew Ferris Peterson¹⁶¹ (Poland, Hungary) and Lena Zander¹⁶². Roland Inglehart and Wayne E. Baker¹⁶³, Shalom H. Swartz¹⁶⁴, Peter B. Smith¹⁶⁵ and those who continued the research conducted by Geert Hofstede were all interested in all four Visegrad countries; the last one being the most famous.

Geert Hofstede – a Dutch social psychologist – created the so-called cultural dimensions or cultural scales in order to describe the differences between the cultures within Europe. He assumes that people distinguish themselves from each other as a result of cultural programming, and that this is the cause of all the misunderstandings, problems and sometimes mutual dislike. According to him the cultural programming depends on the group of cultural socialization or indoctrination. He claims national differences between representatives of nations can be reduced to differences in the collective cultural programming. Most importantly, he explicated the difference between society or cultural groups rather than individual person¹⁶⁶. The comparison of national cultures was made possible in part due to these dimensions. Shalom H. Schwartz, a Hebrew psychologist, writes in his article *A theory of Cultural Values and Some Implications for Work* “cultural values represent the implicitly or explicitly shared abstract ideas about what is good, right and desirable in society”. And then he underlines: “National boundaries do not necessarily correspond to the boundaries of organically developed, relatively homogeneous societies with a shared culture. But there are strong forces towards integration that can produce substantial sharing culture in nations that have existed for some time”¹⁶⁷. In particular, according to Hofstede, the cultural programming refers to four dimensions: power distance, individualism-collectivism, masculinity-femininity,

¹⁵⁹ A. Merritt, *Culture in the Cockpit: Do Hofstede's Dimensions Replicate?*, “Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology” 31 (2000).

¹⁶⁰ F.C. Brodbeck, *et al. Cultural variation of leadership prototypes across 22 European countries*, “Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology” 73(1) (2000).

¹⁶¹ P. B. Smith, M. F. Peterson, *Beyond Value Comparisons: Sources Used to Give Meaning to Management Work Events in Twenty-Nine Countries*, Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Academy of Management, Vancouver, Canada, August 1995.

¹⁶² L. Zander, *Communication & country clusters – A study of language & leadership preferences*, “International Studies in Management and Organization” 35(1) (2005).

¹⁶³ R. Inglehart, W. E. Baker, *Modernization*

¹⁶⁴ Shalom H. Schwartz, *A Theory of Cultural Values and Some Implications for Work*, “Applied Psychology”, 48(1) (1999).

¹⁶⁵ Peter B. Smith, Mark F. Peterson and Shalom H. Schwartz, *Cultural values...*

¹⁶⁶ G. Hofstede, *Cultures and*; G. Hofstede, *Cultures's consequences....*; Shalom H. Schwartz, *Beyond Individualism-Collectivism....*

¹⁶⁷ Shalom H. Schwartz, *A Theory of*; compare to: G. Hofstede, *Cultures and ...*

and uncertainty avoidance. In 1991 Hofstede's student, Mochael Bond, added the fifth dimension, the so-called Confucian dynamism: **Long-Term Orientation and in 2010 Michael Minkov** generated the last dimension and changed the fifth dimension into **Pragmatic versus Normative**.

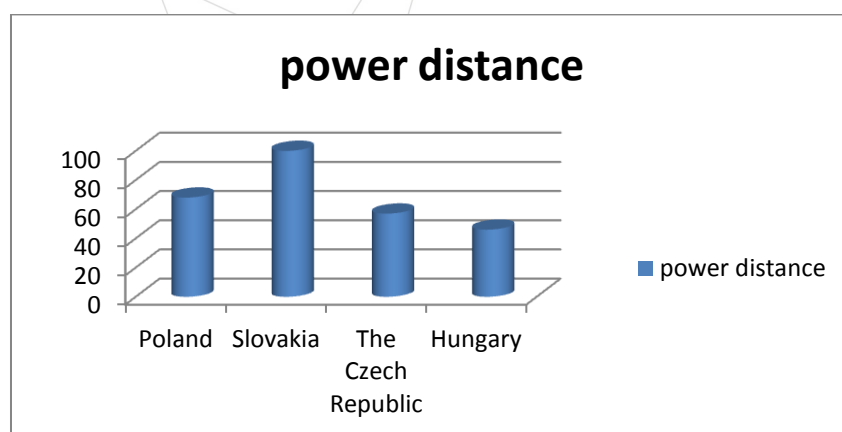
Hofstede believes that knowledge of these dimensions leads to understanding the differences between cultures and allows to effective communications between representatives of different national cultures. This knowledge enables intercultural cooperation. Nowadays it also provides an opportunity to understand the unity of multiplicity or plurality of unity. The four basic dimensions proposed by Hofstede are the same as the four fundamental and universal problems identified by two Americans in 1969, a sociologist Alex Inkeles and psychologist Daniel Levinson: relationship to authority; the concept of the individual in the relationship between the individual and society as well as the relationship between man and woman; and the way of resolving conflicts, including the control of aggression and expressing feelings. Hofstede believes that cultural dimensions are determined by social change. The first two cultural dimensions described by Dutch psychologist - power distance and individualism - collectivism - are associated with European culture, while another two - the masculinity-femininity and uncertainty avoidance - are the challenges of globalization and changes in the organization of social life.

Power distance, as a first dimension, deals with inequality of individuals in their societies. "This dimension expresses the degree to which the less powerful members of a society accept and expect that power is distributed unequally"¹⁶⁸. Society representing large power distance is a society in which people feel as subordinate and dependent upon authority, and their relationship with superiors is characterized by uncertainty and lack of freedom. On the other hand, the public with small power distance is characterized by their development regardless of positions, an attitude of dialogue and openness, equal treatment. It should be noted however, that these are extreme examples. Schwartz underlines that all societies that guarantee responsible behavior will preserve the social fabric. People must be inclined to consider the welfare of others, coordinate with them, and thereby manage the unavoidable social interdependencies. The polar resolution of this issue uses power differences, relying on hierarchical systems. (...) People are socialized and sanctioned to comply with the obligations and rules attached to their roles. The value type expressive of this view is Hierarchy. (...) An

¹⁶⁸ <http://geert-hofstede.com/dimensions.html>, 18 August 2014.

alternative solution to the problem of responsible social behavior is to induce societal members to recognize on another as moral equals who share basic interests as human beings. People are socialized to internalize a commitment to voluntary cooperation with others and to feel concerns for everyone's welfare. The value type expressive of this solution is egalitarianism"¹⁶⁹. According to Hofstede research Visegrad countries represent more of lower hierarchical culture with a high or medium power distance.

Poland is a hierarchical society (68). Poles accept a hierarchical order in which everybody has their own place. Similar the Czech Republic has measures high in this respect (57). That means that Czech society is also a hierarchical society. Hungarians and Slovaks on the other hand, are completely different. The Hungarian score is low (46) – it means they are independent, they believe in equal rights and the hierarchy is only for convenience. The most hierarchical country with a high power distance is Slovakia. It is the highest end of the dimension. It means some people have more power than others and that its socially accepted and even expected.

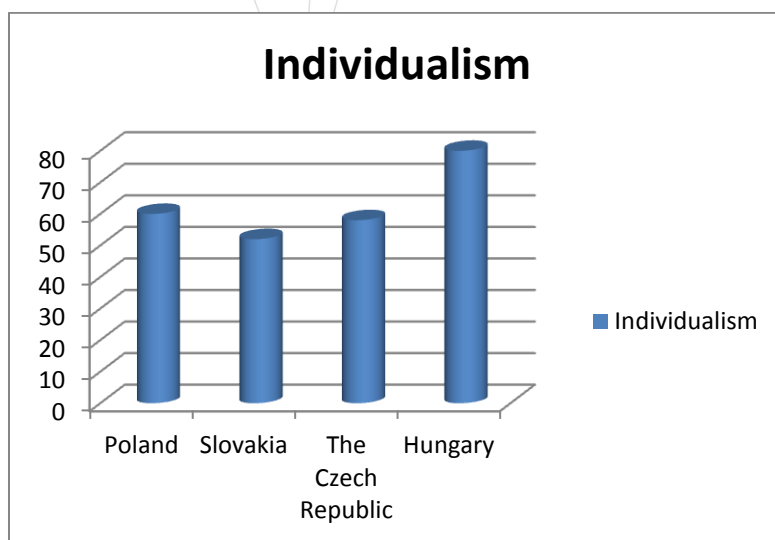


In the case of three countries from Visegrad Group individualism accompanies high power distance what is extremely rare. Most often individualism remains in opposition to high power distance. The second dimension, individualism-collectivism, is “the degree of interdependency a society maintains among its members”¹⁷⁰. This dimension is also called by researchers, individualism-communalism, independence-interdependence, autonomy-relatedness, separateness-interdependence. Schwartz claims this dimension always can be defined as a nature if the relation between the individual and the group. He uses the terminology conservatism-intellectual autonomy/affective autonomy. “The opposite pole of

¹⁶⁹ Shalom H. Schwartz, *A Theory of* p. 27-28.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

this dimension – he underlines – describes cultures in which the person is viewed as an autonomous, bounded entity who finds meaning in his or her own uniqueness, who seeks to express his or her own internal attributes (...) and is encouraged to do so. (...) It is possible to distinguish conceptually between to this new Autonomy; the first refers to ideas and through, the second to feeling and emotions”¹⁷¹. Schwartz claims that every East European country is a conservative country. That means their citizens consider the following elements as very important: family security, respect for tradition, social order, clean, moderate honor, elders, national security, reciprocation of favors, self-discipline, devotion, obedience, wisdom, protecting public image, politeness, forgiveness. Meanwhile according to Hofstede dimension East European countries are diverse and they describe these countries as being characterized by an individualist culture. Researchers from Hofstede’s team claims Poles care primarily about themselves and their families. This contradiction makes that relationships intense and delicate at the same time - people who are higher in the hierarchy must pretend that everyone is important and that they strive for personal contact with everyone. Polish society scored 60 points. “There is a high preference for loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of themselves. In individualistic societies offence causes guilt and a loss of self-esteem”¹⁷². Very similar to Poles are Czechs (58). Hungarians comprise a more individualistic society (80). In the middle of this dimensions and thus it points to not clear preference are Slovaks (52).



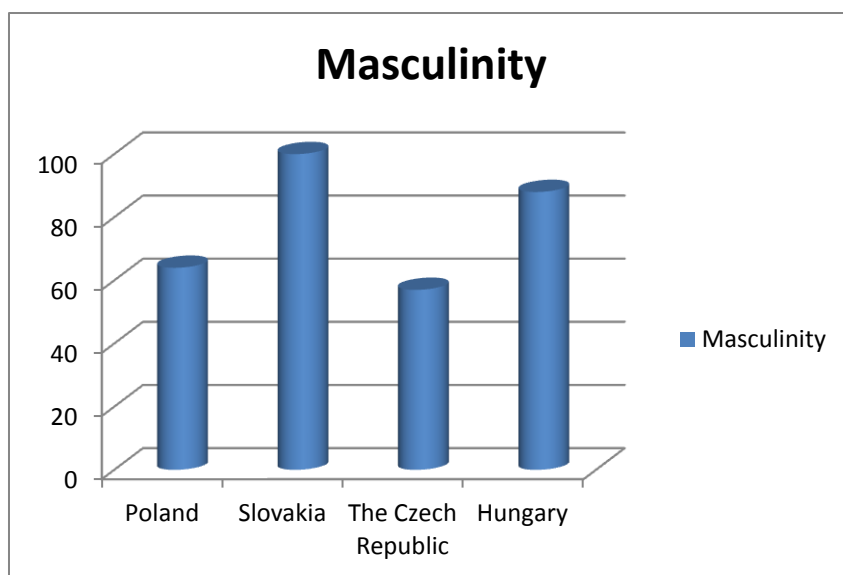
¹⁷¹ Shalom H. Schwartz, *A Theory of ...*, p. 27.

¹⁷² <http://geert-hofstede.com/dimensions.html>, 18 August 2014.

The division between individualistic and collectivistic cultures describes the relationship between individuals. Individualistic cultures are typical in Europe (United Kingdom, Netherlands, but also Australia, USA), in which the ties between individuals are loose and everyone cares primarily about themselves and their families. This culture is characterized by low context communication - and therefore all information must be accurately expressed, explained and reflected -, a high level of self-awareness, a sense of guilt associated violations of social situations and self-respect defined from the individualistic point of view. Meanwhile, collectivist culture (mainly a non-European cultures, such as China, Japan, but also Brazil, Mexico) is characterized by a society in which people belong to groups providing them with care, protection, understanding without words – many issues that do not require additional clarification are expressed using the information inherent in the person and the environment (high communication context). This culture is one of loyalty, willingness to sacrifice for the group, feeling shame and loss of face not only for their transgressions, but also for other members of the group.

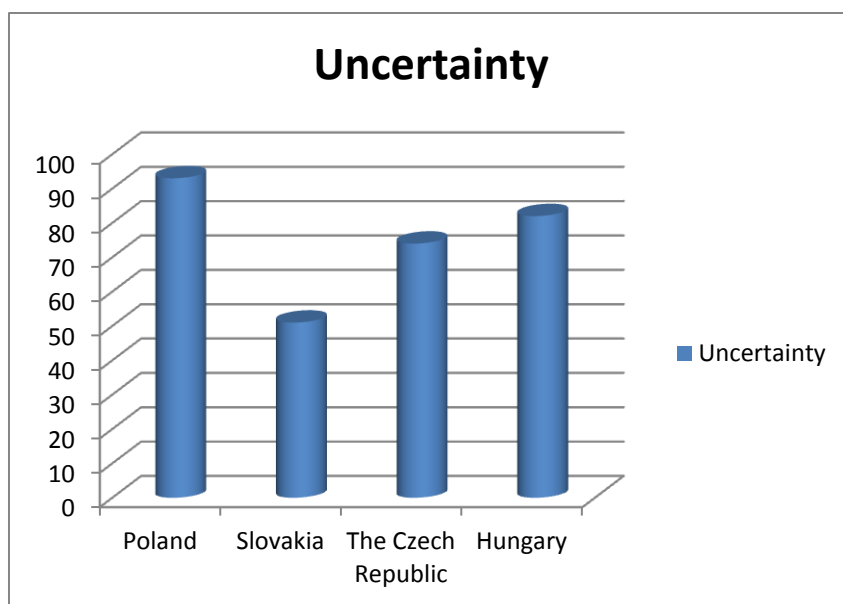
The third dimension described by Hofstede is femininity - masculinity. Masculinity is a feature of societies in which social roles based on gender are stereotypically defined. Masculine society is a society in which "hard" values both among women and men predominate; the main features are attitude to competition, assertiveness, ambition. Femininity is a society in which social gender roles intertwine, that is, both men and women are expected to possess modesty, humility, sensitivity and concern for quality of life. All four Visegrad countries masculine countries, but Slovakia is a particularly masculine society (100) – high success oriented and driven. In Slovakia, the status of being respected is very important. They pay attention to various symbols of status such as cars, houses, brand-name clothes etc. Another strong masculine country, although less than Slovakia, is Hungary (88). People in this country live in order to work; and “competition and performance and conflicts are resolved by fighting them out”¹⁷³. Similarly Poland is a masculine society - subordinates expect an employee to be determined and resolute and care about equality, competitiveness and productivity. Conflicts are unwelcome and people avoid them. A far less masculine society is the Czech Republic (57).

¹⁷³ Ibid.



The last dimension described by Hofstede – uncertainty avoidance - measures the position of citizens in the case of new, unknown or uncertain situations. It describes the ways to cope with difficult situations and measures anxiety, stress and the need for a sense of predictability. Cultures with a higher level of uncertainty are cultures of expression which in contrast to peaceful cultures with low uncertainty avoidance, allow for an open display of emotion, and as a result stress is not muffled and it gives vent to the negative emotion. Poland is characterized by strong emotional need for rules and rigid codes. It has a very high preference of avoiding uncertainty (93). In Poland time is money, there is no tolerance for unorthodox behavior and ideas, security is an important element in individual motivation, people have an inner urge to be busy and work hard, precision and punctuality are the norm, and innovative may be resisted¹⁷⁴. Also Hungary (82) and the Czech Republic have a high preference of avoiding uncertainty (74). Slovakia shows no clear preference (51).

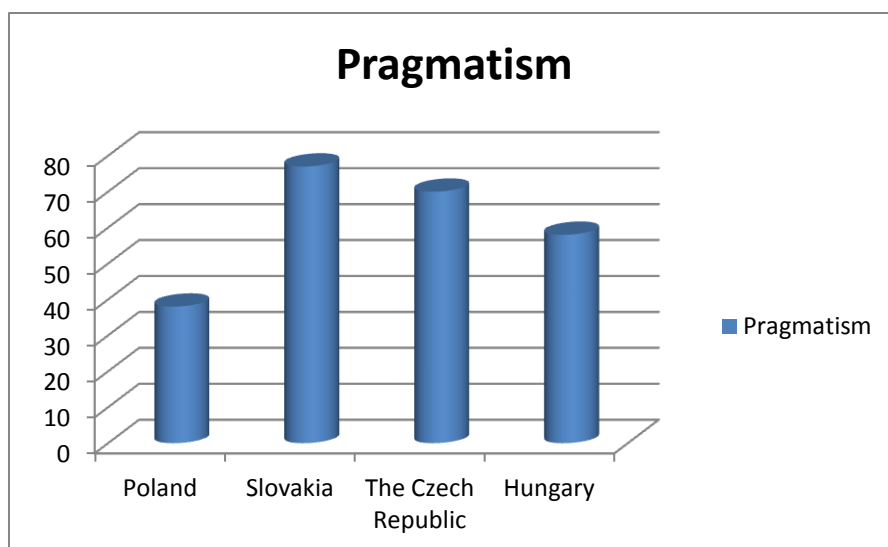
¹⁷⁴ Ibid.



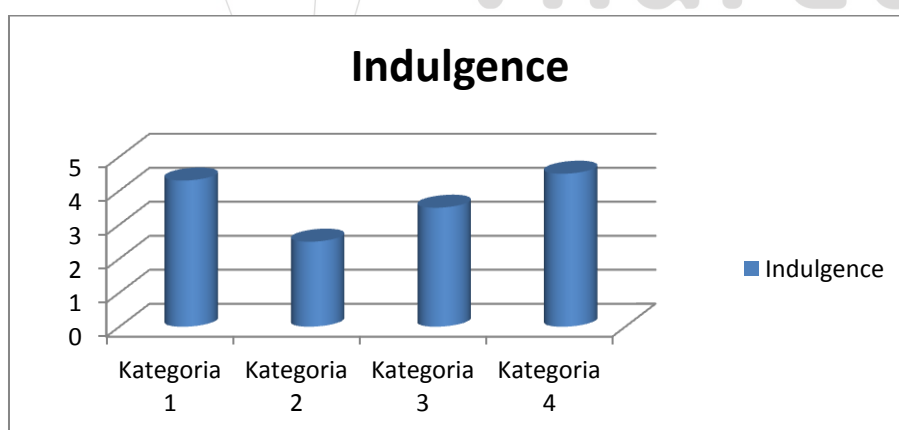
There are also two dimensions in the Hofstede research which allow describing and differentiating the culture of Visegrad countries. Pragmatism is a dimension which describes “how every society has to maintain some links with its own past while dealing with the challenges of the present and future”¹⁷⁵. It divides cultures into normative cultures (low score) which prefer to maintain time-honored traditions, and norms, while pragmatic cultures (high score) encourage thrift and efforts in modern education as a way to prepare for the future. Poland (38) represents a normative culture. Truth and tradition are important and people are normative in their thinking, focusing on achieving quick results. Slovakia is opposite to Poland (77) and it is a pragmatic society. People believe that truth depends on a given situation, time and place as well as point of view. They conform and adapt to contemporary times and changing the tradition. They have a strong propensity to save and invest, and persevere in achieving results¹⁷⁶. Similar to Slovakia, the Czech Republic (70) is also a pragmatic society. Hungary (58) has a pragmatic orientation but this orientation is not strong.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.



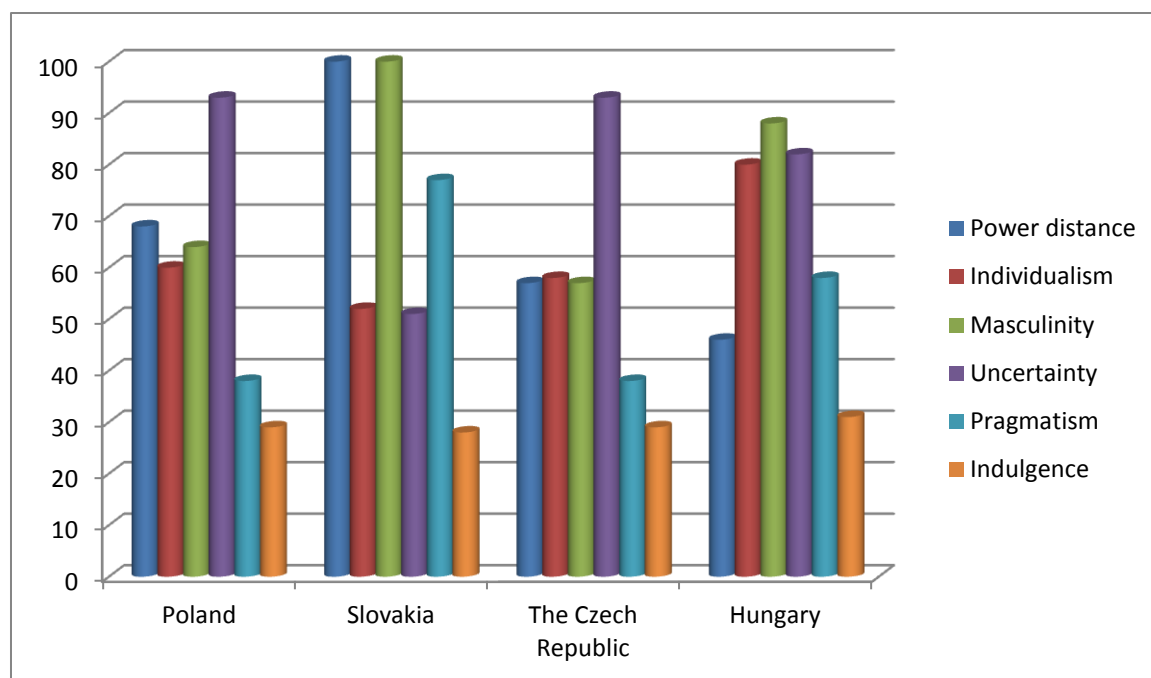
Indulgence, as the last dimension, “is defined at extent to which people try to control their desires and impulses”¹⁷⁷. According to this dimension cultures are divided into indulgence culture with relatively weak control and restraint with relatively strong control. Polish (29) culture is a restraint culture. Poles do not put much emphasis on leisure time and control the gratification of their desires. Slovakia also scores low (28), as does Czech Republic (29) and Hungary (31). Their actions are restrained by social norms and perceive indulging themselves as somewhat wrong¹⁷⁸.



Using the cultural dimension by Hofstede and his students are able to show the differences inside the Visegrad countries. Some parameters are similar but majority differ from each other. The chart below illustrates the differences.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.



Schwartz adds one more distinction among cultures. This dimension confronts societies in the framework of “the relation of humankind to the natural and social world. One response is actively to master and change the world, to assert control, assimilate it to ours, and exploit it in order to further personal or group interests. The value type expressive of this orientation is mastery: A cultural emphasis on getting ahead through active self-assertion”¹⁷⁹. In opposite to mastery there is harmony: “a cultural emphasis on fitting harmoniously into the environment”¹⁸⁰. According to Hebrew psychologist all Visegrad countries are characterized by harmony, which means unity with nature, protecting environment and beauty are important for their citizens.

Meanwhile, Inglehart and Baker notices not only the political history influences culture but also religion and economic development. “Communist regimes made major efforts to eradicate traditional values, and they seem to have had some success. But historically Roman Catholic societies proved relatively resistant to secularization, even after controlling the effects of economic development and Communist rule”¹⁸¹. They use two dimensions which reflect cross-national polarization between traditional versus secular-rational orientation toward authority; and survival versus self-expression value¹⁸². They claim: “the full range of ‘traditions’ is diverse, a mainstream version of preindustrial society having a number of

¹⁷⁹ Shalom H. Schwartz, *Beyond Individualism-Collectivism*, p. 28.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.,

¹⁸¹ R. Inglehart, W. E. Baker, *Modernization*, p. 38.

¹⁸² Ibid., p. 23.

common characteristics can be identified. All of the preindustrial societies for which we have data show relative low level of tolerance (...); tend to emphasize male dominance in economic and political life, defense to parental authority”¹⁸³. And then they underline: “The former Communist societies also rank relatively high on this secularization dimension, despite varying degrees of industrialization”¹⁸⁴. They believe a heritage of communist rule has an impact on interpersonal behavior and values such as trust, for example. But also very important in cultural distinguish is religion. It is specifically visible on the example of Poland. Poland lies on the boundaries between historically communist countries and historically Catholic countries. Agnieszka Kościńska notices: “Poland is a predominately Roman Catholic country. According to Church data about 95% of citizens have been baptized. Although it does not mean that all baptized ones are engaged in regular religious practice, the dominant position of Catholicism in the country is unquestionable. In spite of the secular character of the Polish state, the church has a significant influence in the country. Thus, the Church is visible in the public sphere. (...) The Church and various Catholic associations also have considerable influence on the legislative process. (...) The influence of the Church is conditioned historically; the Church played an extremely important role in the Polish struggle for independence (...) during the Communist rule after the Second World War. After the downfall of Communism in 1989 the Church supported the new governing elite with its symbolic power”¹⁸⁵. Catholic Church is, according to Inglehart and Baker, a prototype of hierarchical, centrally controlled institution. While “protestant churches are relatively decentralized and more open to local control. The contrast between local control and domination by a remote hierarchy has important long-term consequences for interpersonal trust. Hungary are interesting country in this field. In Hungary there is no official religion and the law guarantees freedom of religious. More than a half of citizens (especially residents of west and north part of country) are Roman Catholic, but there is also a lot of Protestant churches. Similar situation is in Slovakia. Just as Hungary, Slovakia is characterized by position between Roman Catholic and Protestant Church. More than a half of Slovaks are followers of the Roman Catholic Church (62%), but there is also a lot of people who are Protestants and belong to Greek Catholic Church. Also more than 13 percent declare to be atheistic. While The Czech Republic is historically a Roman Catholic country but currently it

¹⁸³ Ibid., p. 24.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 35.

¹⁸⁵ A. Kościńska, *New Religious Movements and the State in Poland, w: Social and Cultural Diversity in Central and Easter Europe: Old factors and New Prague*, 2005; <http://www.mkc.cz/uploaded/download/Bulletin%20Social%20and%20Cultural%20Diversity.pdf>, 21 May 2014, p. 21.

is one of the most atheistic countries in the world. “Protestant societies rank higher on the survival/self expression dimension than do all of the historically Roman Catholic societies – write American professors – regardless of the extent to which their labor forces are engaged in the service sector”¹⁸⁶. And they add that the Catholic societies of Eastern Europe constitute a distinct sub-cluster of the Catholic world-midway between the West European Catholic societies and the Orthodox societies.

The second factor of cultural diversity is, according to Inglehart and Baker the pace and the way of economic development.” They noticed that ex-Communist societies fall into two groups – those that experienced economic and social collapse, and those that made a successful transition to market economies”¹⁸⁷. According to their research, two of four Visegrad countries illustrate positive growth rates: Poland and Hungary.

Researchers such as Hofstede, Hall, Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner attempt to describe and demonstrate the differences between cultures, believing that the knowledge can facilitate international communication. Some researchers still try to describe Eastern European countries as countries characterized by similar culture. Gyula Bakacsi, Takács Sándor, Karácsonyi András and Imrek Viktor in their article *Eastern Europe cluster: tradition and transition* characterize Eastern Europe as countries which prefer “autonomy (utilitarian involvement) vs. loyal involvement and hierarchy (conservatism) vs. equality (egalitarian commitment). Hampden-Turner and Trompenaars found eastern European countries (...Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland...) to be particularistic, medium to high individualistic, mostly specific, ascribed (non-achievement oriented), outer directed, and synchronous (polychronic). (...) Summarizing the eastern European cluster, its societal culture is highly group oriented and dominated by hierarchical managerial practices (...) All the religious tradition in the region (...) suggest uncertainty avoidance. (...) eastern European cultures are also considered as collectivistic societies. The collectivistic ideology, the religious roots and the common sense all promote this view.”¹⁸⁸. Meanwhile the detailed description of every country from Visegrad group presents the differences between each country. And just the knowledge alone about the difference makes it possible to correct communication. The foregoing analysis shows that cross-national cultural variation is closely associated with a society’s level of economic development, religion as well as cultural heritage and so-called collective

¹⁸⁶ R. Inglehart, W. E. Baker, *Modernization ...*, p. 31.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

¹⁸⁸ Gyula B., Takács S., Karácsonyi A., Imrek V., *Eastern Europe cluster: tradition and transition*, “Journal of World Business 37 (2002), p. 69, 75, 79.

programming of the mind. It seems that behaviors are always enacted within a defined context and this context will help to define one of various possible meanings to those who are active in that context”¹⁸⁹. All divisions of culture in fact can be reduced to similar aspects and are involved in three components, which Hofstede describes as symbols – that means gestures, codes, vocabulary, nomenclature, ways of greeting and conversation; rituals and values. Knowledge about cultural differences allows for effective intercultural relations and leads to cultural awareness and cross cultural sensitivity¹⁹⁰. Meanwhile ignorance leads to culture shock¹⁹¹ caused by contact with another, unknown culture and its manifestations. Such cultural shock can result in creating distance between foreign cultures and even can promote isolation. Peter B. Smith, Mark F. Peterson and Shalom H. Schwartz add more consequences of knowing and understanding the differences between cultures: “Country-level dimensions of cultural values are frequently employed in management programs concerning cultural awareness. (...) At the same time, recent critics have argued that culture-level characterizations are a distraction from the more important goal of understanding individual-level variability in behavior”¹⁹². He underlines how important is cultural-level guidance in any type of multinational enterprise, in planning and conduct of international joint venture partnership and multicultural teams.

The last comment is especially important from the point of view of the participant of my workshops. She understands the importance of knowing the culture within which is necessary to work with. It is important to know how to give command, work in groups as well as individually, focus on group or individuals, providing or not providing all details to responders or not, what subjects are delicate during a chat, in what way to spend leisure time, in which way to talk about future, or how to inform about uncertainty etc. These factors and many others have a direct impact on effective cooperation. The participants understand that every tourney should be precede by studying the culture first, even when the tourney is from one Visegrad country to another one, from ex-communistic, ex-soviet country to another one, from Poland to Hungary. Cultural difference still plays a very important role. The knowledge of one another may not only impact positively by facilitating the communication between citizens in Visegrad countries but also promote knowledge about cultures.

¹⁸⁹ P. B. Smith, M.F. Peterson, S. H. Schwartz, *Cultural Values* ..., p. 189.

¹⁹⁰ G. Bateson, *Umysł i przyroda: jedność konieczna*, Translated by A. Tanalska-Dulęba, Warszawa 1996.

¹⁹¹ K. Oberg, *Cultural Shock: Adjustment to New Cultural Environments*, “Practical Anthropology” 7 (1960), http://agem-ethnomedizin.de/download/cu29_2-3_2006_S_142-146_Repr_Oberg.pdf, 15 April 2013.

¹⁹² P. B. Smith, M.F. Peterson, S. H. Schwartz, *Cultural Values* ..., p. 205.

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THE PARTY SYSTEM OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

The turn of the 80s and 90s of the twentieth century in Czechoslovakia was marked by the beginning of the systemic changes in political, economic and social spheres. At the same time in the following years the process of disintegration of the state took place, in result of which on the 1st January 1993 two countries emerged – the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. The changes were also bound to occur in the political system and its various components, including the party system. They were triggered off by two factors: the collapse of the communist system and the division of Czechoslovakia.

1. The development of the party system of the Czech Republic

The historical beginnings of the political parties on the territory of the Czech state date back to the second half of the nineteenth century¹⁹³. During the communist period – likewise in other socialist countries – a mono-party system evolved in Czechoslovakia, characterised by the existence of a dominant communist party and other, minor, satellite parties¹⁹⁴. Efforts were made to keep up appearances of democracy, thus the functioning of these formations was permitted.

The ground for the development of democracy, with multiparty system as its indispensable characteristic, was laid by the fall of the communist system and the Velvet Revolution (demonstrations in Prague on 17th November 1989). Already in November of that year the regulation concerning the leading role of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia disappeared from its constitution. The opposition formed their own parties, although from a

¹⁹³ M. Bankowicz, *Systemy władzy państwowej Czechosłowacji i Czech. Studium instytucjonalno-polityczne*. Kraków 1998, pp. 41-47, 90-93; K. Vodička, L. Cabada, *Politický systém České republiky. Historie a současnost*. Praha 2003, pp. 27-34, 202.

¹⁹⁴ K. Skotnicki, *System konstytucyjny Czech*. Warszawa 2000, p. 30.

formal point of view, they were not: in this way Civic Forum (OF – Občanské forum) was established in the Czech Republic¹⁹⁵. Even before the disintegration of the common state the independent party systems of the Czech Republic and Slovakia were created¹⁹⁶, which was a peculiar phenomenon.

The essential foundations of the party system were laid in the years 1989–1992, although some of the parties emerged in the later period. The "historical parties" were reactivated, such as Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD - Česká strana sociálně demokratická) or Czechoslovak People's Party (ČSL – Československá strana lidová) which with time became the main driving force behind the coalition formed with the Christian Democratic Union (KDU - Křesťanská a demokratická unie). The Communist Party underwent changes - it developed into the present Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM – Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy). Moravian regionalism was emphasized by Movement for Autonomous Democracy – Association for Moravia and Silesia (HSD – SMS - Hnutí za samosprávnou demokracii - Společnost pro Moravu a Slezsko)¹⁹⁷. There were also a lot of populist parties, such as Association for the Republic – Republican Party of Czechoslovakia (SPR-RSČ – Sdružení pro republiku – Republikánská strana Československa), which after the elections in 1992 and 1996 entered the parliament. Its main election slogan was anti-communism, which at that time was enough to gain noticeable support¹⁹⁸. In addition, there were other groups of diversified profiles, including Green Party (SZ - Strana Zelených) or Democratic Union (DEU – Demokratická unie)¹⁹⁹. They did not play any significant role.

OF played the dominant role after the Velvet Revolution. The political scene, however, began to diversify and new groups were forming and trying to take over the legacy from the Forum. In this way, the right-wing Civic Democratic Party (ODS - Občanská demokratická strana) emerged and occupied a significant place in the party system over the years, as well as the Civic Democratic Alliance (ODA - Občanská demokratická aliance)

¹⁹⁵ J. Tomaszewski, *Czechosłowacja*. Warszawa 199, pp. 248-249; Z. Jičínský, *Politický fenomén OF a problémy jeho působení*. [in:] V. Dvořáková, A. Gerloch, *Krystalizace struktury politických stran v České republice po roce 1989*. Praha 1996, pp. 64-65.

¹⁹⁶ P. Fiala, V. Hloušek, *System partyjny Czech*. [in:] A. Antoszewski, P. Fiala, R. Herbut, J. Sroka, *Partie i systemy partyjne Europy Środkowej*. Wrocław 2003, pp. 17-19.

¹⁹⁷ P. Fiala, V. Hloušek, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-23; J. Tomaszewski, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-251.

¹⁹⁸ K. Wojtas, *Partie populistyczne w Czechach i na Słowacji*. Warszawa 2011, pp. 169-170.

¹⁹⁹ K. Skotnicki, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.

which eventually disappeared from the political scene (the last time it was present in the parliament after the elections in 1996)²⁰⁰.

The number of political parties was substantial – in the middle of 1990's there were 70 officially registered parties. Most of them had no chance of parliamentary representation, eg. Independent Erotic Initiative (NEI - Nezavisla Eroticka Iniciativa) or Beer-Lovers Party (SPP – Strana Přatel Piva)²⁰¹. In turn, Liberal-Social Union (LSU Liberálně sociální unie), a member of electoral coalition, played only an episodic role, it crossed the electoral threshold in the elections in 1992, but in the following years it underwent defragmentation. With time, the number of parties was reduced and in the elections of 2002 only 29 took part²⁰². The results of the elections to the Czech National Council in 1990–92 are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Results of the elections to the Czech National Council in 1990–92.

Party	Percentage of votes 1990	Percentage of votes 1992
OF	49,50	4,6
KSČM	13,24	14,05
KDU	8,42	6,28
HSD-SMS	10,03	5,87
ČSSD	4,11	6,53
ODS-KDS	-	29,73
ODA	-	5,93
SPR-RSČ	-	5,98
LSU	-	6,52

²⁰⁰ Ibidem, pp. 30-31.

²⁰¹ M. Migalski, *Czechy*. [in:] M. Migalski (ed.), *Partie i systemy partyjne państw Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej*. Sosnowiec 2004, pp. 10-11.

²⁰² K. Vodička, L. Cabada, *op. cit.*, p. 231.

Source: www.volby.cz

2. In the independent Czech state

The party scene after 1993 was characterized by increasingly strong position of the ODS and the ČSSD which decidedly won the consecutive elections. In 2006 over two thirds of voters voted in their favour. The support they gained, however, was never high enough for them to be able to govern alone.

Consequently, coalitions were created with difficulty because both the left and right wing a priori excluded cooperation with KSČM (for example an informal isolation of this party in the parliament in the years 1992–1996). The post-communists regularly received support of over 10%, and in 2002 even more than 18.5% of the vote. Except for elections in 2010 KSČM was the third force in the Parliament. The left and right wing parties started a noticeable rivalry. The policy at the governmental level was based on cooperation, because only under this condition it was possible to establish stable cabinets²⁰³.

The strongest parties made attempts to reduce the influence of the political parties with clearly weaker support from voters. As an example of this type of action can serve so called opposition agreement between the ODS and the ČSSD in 1998 enabling, on the one hand, the establishment of the Social Democratic minority cabinet, and on the other hand, being the prelude to the attempts aiming at the change of the electoral law in such a way that it became possible to shape a clear majority in the Chamber of Deputies. The final change in the electoral law did not go as far as originally planned, due to, among other issues, the questioning of its various provisions by the Constitutional Court²⁰⁴.

The strong position of the ODS and the ČSSD was upset in the elections of 2010, both parties won a total of just over 42% of the vote, it was the worst result in the history of the independent Czech Republic. After the next three years, the Social Democrats were able to maintain support at the level of approx. 20%, but ODS no longer managed it (just over 7%).

²⁰³ K. Wojtas, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-151.

²⁰⁴ P. Fiala, V. Hloušek, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-47, 50-51.

The elections of 2010 brought some changes on the party scene. For the first time since the Velvet Revolution the Christian Democrats of KDU-ČSL were not present in the Chamber of Deputies. Yet two new groups gained strong support. The first was Tradition, Responsibility, Prosperity 09 (TOP 09 - Tradice Odpovědnost Prosperita), a conservative, right-wing party, supporting the integration processes in Europe, established in 2009 as a result of a split within the Christian Democrats. The support of more than 16% of the voters was the result worth noticing and from that moment TOP 09 should be considered as an active ingredient of the party system of the Republic. The second party, which in 2010 entered the parliament was Public Affairs (VV – Veči Veřejné), advocating, among others issues, the introduction of decision-making process in the form of direct democracy. VV proved to be an episodic formation, despite its participation in the government, and three years later the party did not obtain sufficient support among voters. The Greens still played a marginal role in the Czech politics, although their entrance to the parliament in 2006 was a success.

The last elections to the Chamber of Deputies (25–26 October 2013) brought reshuffle on the party scene. Admittedly, the Social Democrats won, but with the support of only slightly more than 20% of votes. Undoubtedly, ODS recorded electoral defeat, TOP 09, led by the former minister of foreign affairs Karel Schwarzenberg²⁰⁵, also lost some votes. In turn, the support for the Czech communists increased by more than 3%.

However, Czech commentators of the political scene in the Czech Republic recognized Action of Dissatisfied Citizens 2011 (ANO 2011 - Akce nespokojených občanů) formation as the real winner. It gained more than 18% of the vote and 47 seats in the 200-seats Chamber of Deputies. Besides, the elections confirmed the thesis about the fragmentation of the political scene of the Czech Republic.

ANO 2011 party was formed in autumn 2011. Its leader was Andrej Babiš – entrepreneur, billionaire controlling Agrofert Holding a.s. one of the largest companies in the Czech Republic (agri-food and chemical industry). The program of the party proclaimed, among other issues, the need to combat corruption, to heal the Czech political system, and to introduce the rule of law. The populism of Babiš's party is reflected by its priorities announced before the elections and summed up in three slogans: 1) we will give people jobs, 2) apply the same rules for everyone, 3) so that our children want to live here²⁰⁶. The support

²⁰⁵ Schwarzenberg gained the highest number of votes of all the candidates 37,8 thousand.

²⁰⁶ <http://www.anobudelip.cz/program/>, 20.10.2013.

for ANO was slowly growing as the elections were approaching, although for a long time public opinion survey was showing that the formation would not be able to achieve as much as 5% of the vote. The final result was therefore all the more surprising.

In the Chamber of Deputies ANO 2011 has only 3 seat less than the ČSSD. In 4 out of 14 Czech provinces (which are also constituencies) Babiš's party even enjoyed victory (the provinces: Ústecký Středočeský, Liberecký, Královéhradecký). The leader of the party was later appointed the deputy prime minister and the minister of finance in the new government.

In my opinion catchy election slogans certainly helped gain the support of almost one fifth of the voters. Not without significance were the political scandals afflicting the highest party and government circles as well as the consequences of Europe-wide economic crisis which also affected the Czech Republic. In the survey conducted on 11–18 November 2013 by public opinion research center CVVM (Centrum pro výzkum veřejného mínění) 17% of respondents identified the Czech economic situation as very bad, 45% as poor, 28% as neither good nor bad, and only 8% as good²⁰⁷.

Not without significance is the general dissatisfaction with the quality of the Czech politics, also at the party level. In November 2013 the Chamber of Deputies was trusted by only 15% of respondents²⁰⁸. This should be regarded as a dramatically low result, although about 5% higher than in December 2012. It was to be connected with the general crisis of confidence in the Czech society. As early as in 2002 the fewest number of respondents trusted the political parties (only 12%) and the parliament earned only slightly higher opinions (26%). In general, this assessment expresses the society's conviction that people are plotting, the mafia is everywhere and there are secret networks influencing decisions²⁰⁹.

Strong support for the newly formed party denotes a significant change on the Czech political scene, especially alongside with the dramatic decline in support for the ODS, which for many years played a leading role. At the same time it seems too early to formulate a thesis about the stability of these changes. It is necessary to confirm the high level of support in the next elections to the parliament.

²⁰⁷ *Občané o hospodářské situaci ČR a o životní úrovni svých domácností – listopad 2013.* http://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/media/com_form2content/documents/c1/a7139/f3/ev131202.pdf, 12.12.2013.

²⁰⁸ *Důvěra ústavním institucím v listopadu 2013.* http://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/media/com_form2content/documents/c1/a7140/f3/pi131202.pdf, 12.12.2013. The greatest trust enjoyed local authorities at the municipal level (59%).

²⁰⁹ J. Kalous, *Důvěra v české společnosti*. [w:] J. Končelík, B. Köpplová, I. Prázová, *Konsolidace vládnutí a podnikání v České Republice a Evropské Unii*. Praha 2002, Vol. II, p. 76.

The voices of the dissatisfied undoubtedly contributed to the support of the Úsvit – movement - Dawn of Direct Democracy (ÚSVIT - Úsvit přímé demokracie), founded in the spring of 2013, which crossed the electoral threshold winning 14 seats in the parliament. The formation, headed by Senator Tomio Okamura, should be rated among the populist parties. It calls, among other issues, for the introduction of direct democracy, personal responsibility of politicians for their decisions, tax cuts and the creation of a system supporting the elderly and families with children²¹⁰. Also in this case the next elections will be able to help answer the question of whether the support for Úsvit has been long-lasting or only incidental.

The thesis that after the elections of October 2013 the party system of the Republic has become less stable seems well founded. It was manifested by the process of creation of a government coalition which lasted more than three months. The chairman of the winning formation Bohuslav Sobotka, stood at the head of the new government. The government was sworn in on 29 January 2014. The Cabinet was formed by ČSSD, ANO 2011 and KDU-ČSL²¹¹.

As a part of the government coalition ANO has a real influence on the rule. Its "to be or not to be" in the Czech politics depends on how it will use this instrument. Undoubtedly, in the future elections it will be no longer able to benefit from the position of a newcomer that is not laden with the burden of the participation in government. The results of the elections to the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic in the years 1996–2013 are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Results of the elections to the Czech Chamber of Deputies in the years 1996–2013 (support in %)²¹²

Party	1996	1998	2002	2006	2010	2013
ODS	29,62	27,74	24,47	35,38	20,22	7,72

²¹⁰ *Program hnutí. Deset zásadních programových bodů politického hnutí Úsvit přímé demokracie.* <http://www.hnutiusvit.cz/program-hnuti>, 16.02.2014. The program proposes the reduction of VAT from 20 to 14%, the introduction of the law obligating people to prove the origin of property, making raising taxes impossible, finally it exposes aversion to being "a province of the European Union" (the transfer of sovereignty in certain areas EU authorities would be possible only by referendum).

²¹¹ http://zpravy.idnes.cz/jmenovani-koalicni-vlady-bohuslava-sobotky-fzd-/domaci.aspx?c=A140129_100909_domaci_kop, 30.01.2014.

²¹² The table includes data relating to groups, which after 1996 elections crossed the electoral threshold.

ČSSD	26,44	32,31	30,20	32,32	22,08	20,45
KDU-ČSL	8,08	9,00	14,27	7,22	4,39	6,78
KSČM	10,33	11,03	18,51	12,81	11,27	14,91
SPR-RSČ	8,01	3,90	-	-	-	-
ODA	6,36	-	-	-	-	-
US	-	8,60	-	0,30	-	-
SZ	-	1,12	2,36	6,29	2,44	3,19
VV	-	-	-	-	10,88	-
TOP 09	-	-	-	-	16,70	11,99
ANO 2011	-	-	-	-	-	18,65
Úsvit	-	-	-	-	-	6,88

Source: www.volby.cz, „Týden”, no. 44/2013, 29th October 2013, p. 11. In the elections in 2002 KDU

competed in the electoral coalition of US-DEU.

The party scene of the Czech Republic after 1993 is characterized by several major lines of conflicts and divisions. The first noticeable one was a social dividing line between supporters of the existing systemic solutions (post-communist party) and the actions aiming at political and economic transformation (the other formations). In time, this division lost its importance. Another conflict concerned the speed and depth of changes (faster changes were supported by the ODS, KDU and ODA, slower by groupings such as ČSSD and KSČM). Over time, the importance of the dominant socio-economic dividing line increased. At the same time it contributed to the temporary consolidation of the right and left side of the stage. At the beginning of the present century another dividing line referring to the relation to

European integration became noticeable²¹³. The conflict between supporters and opponents of the market economy, represented by KSČM, could also be discernable²¹⁴.

What marked the party scene of the Czech Republic was political scandals affecting the stability of governments. In the spring of 2005, Prime Minister Stanislav Gross resigned after having had trouble with explaining the origin of his wealth. Four years later public opinion was shocked to see Prime Minister Miroslav Topolánek's photographs in the company of naked women in a villa of the Italian head of government Silvio Berlusconi. In 2010 corruption allegations led to resignation of the President of the Chamber of Deputies Miroslav Vlczek²¹⁵.

The elections of 2013 were held before schedule. In June 2013 the government of Petr Nečas resigned, which was the consequence of corruption scandal in which persons from the immediate surroundings of the head of the government were involved²¹⁶. Also, another "technical government" of Prime Minister Jiří Rusnok did not avoid an image mishap caused by an unfortunate statement, recorded by the media, concerning his reluctance to go to Nelson Mandela's funeral (due to the long distance)²¹⁷.

3. Institutionalization of political parties

The legal regulations concerning the existence of political parties and their activities in the Czech Republic do not stand out as particularly exceptional. General rules can be found in the acts of constitutional status and the acts on political parties which are more detailed.

Already before the end of the functioning of the federation, on 16 December 1992, the Czech National Council passed the Constitution of the Czech Republic. Another important document of the constitutional system of the Czech state was the Charter of Fundamental

²¹³ P. Fiala, V. Hloušek, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-35, 54-55. Also presently the attitude to European integration is, to a limited extent, a noticeable dividing line of the scene.

²¹⁴ K. Vodička, *Das politische System Tschechiens*. Wiesbaden 2005, pp. 146-147.

²¹⁵ D. Sieklucki, *System partyjny Czech*. [in:] B. Kosowska-Gąstoł (ed.), *Systemy partyjne państw Unii Europejskiej*. Kraków 2010, p. 80.

²¹⁶ <http://www.tvn24.pl/wiadomosci-ze-swiata,2/skandal-na-szczytach-wladzy-jednak-wymusil-wybory-czeska-izba-poselska-rozwiazana,348425.html>, 20.10.2013.

²¹⁷ http://www.tyden.cz/rubriky/domaci/rusnok-ty-vole-umrel-mandela-kdo-tam-pojede-a-kdo-zaplati_291276.html#.UyTP3c7n2Ww, 09.12.2013.

Rights and Freedoms which had been earlier passed by the Federal Assembly. The Charter was included in the constitutional order on the same day²¹⁸.

Both documents refer to the party system. The Constitution does it in general sense. In art. 5 it is emphasized that the political system „is based on freedom and voluntary establishment and free competition of political parties”²¹⁹. It, therefore, clearly states that parties should compete among themselves (for voters), which in fact is the main feature of the multi-party system. Parties must respect the principles of democracy and reject violence as a means that could serve their goals. This is an important assumption to ensure a democratic and peaceful solving of social problems. Political decisions are based on the will of the majority as expressed through voting (Article 6).

Parties also are mentioned in art. 87, concerning the Constitutional Court. It decides, among other issues, whether an act of disbanding a political party and other decisions relating to their activities are in compliance with the Constitution and the law.

Constitutional provisions are further developed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms. In the second chapter of the Charter there is art. 20 that gives citizens the right to form political parties and movements as well as to belong to them²²⁰. It is stipulated that the parties and movements are separated from the state. The execution of these rights may be restricted if this is necessary for national security, for protection of safety and public order, for prevention of punishable acts, and finally, for protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

The provisions were detailed in the laws and regulations on political parties. These currently in force were passed in October 1991²²¹. They regulate issues of formation, liquidation, outlawing of a party. Parties are founded in course of so-called registration procedure, records are kept by the ministry of internal affairs. As illegal shall be deemed parties whose activities, programme or structure would be in conflict with the principles of democracy, would jeopardize the rights and freedoms of citizens, or would have the objective of overthrowing the democratic order. The existence of this type of evidence is the reason for refusal to register a party, or its outlawing by the Supreme Court in Brno. The parties are

²¹⁸ *Konstytucja Republiki Czeskiej z 16 grudnia 1992 r.* Translated by M. Kruk. Warszawa 2000, pp. 24-25

²¹⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 35; K. Vodička, L. Cabada, *op. cit.*, pp. 204-205.

²²⁰ *Karta Praw Podstawowych i Wolności*. [in:] *Konstytucja Republiki...*, *op. cit.*, art. 20, p. 75.

²²¹ D. Sieklucki, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

funded by membership fees, donations and income, and on the other hand, by grants from budgetary resources²²².

Undertaking the activity by a political party in the Czech Republic is possible after its registration by the Ministry of the Interior Affairs. The application for registration should be signed by a minimum of 3 persons (aged over 18 years who are not members of any other party or movement), to which a list with the signatures of at least 1 000 people (including non-members of other groups) and the status of a party should be attached²²³. According to data from 20 August 2014 251 movements and political parties were registered in the Czech Republic²²⁴.

4. Classification of the party system of the Czech Republic

The party system of the Republic has evolved. The number of political parties has changed, as well as their real impact on the political decisions in the country. Some of them disappeared from the party scene, the new ones emerged. Consequently, in the different periods the system can be described as diversified²²⁵.

The party system of modern Czech Republic, according to Maurice Duverger's typology, is a multi-party system. There are, in practice, at least three groups likely to gain power. None of them is able to obtain such an advantage to be able to govern alone. As a result the Czech party scene is characterized by coalitions, often with the participation of 3–4 parties²²⁶. Also at present there are 3 governing parties.

These coalitions are changeable as far as the number of members, and unstable if we take into account the very process of governance. The consequence are early elections and government crises. The last elections of 2013 were also caused by these factors.

²²² Ibidem, pp. 76-77; K. Vodička, *Das politische System Tschechiens*. [in:] W. Ismayr (ed.), *Die politischen Systeme Osteuropas*. Opladen 2002, pp. 255-256. Reimbursement of campaign expenses is granted to parties that gain the support of at least 1.5% of the vote. Parties that receive at least 3% of the votes are supported by annual resources, while parties with the support of over 5% receive also grants for each mandate obtained.)

²²³ K. Vodička, *Das politische System Tschechiens*. [w:] W. Ismayr (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 256.

²²⁴ <http://aplikace.mvcr.cz/seznam-politickych-stran/SearchResult.aspx?search=all>, 20.08.2014.

²²⁵ In the most widespread approach the most important criterion is the number of parties in the system. See: K. Sobolewska-Myślik, *Partie i systemy partyjne na świecie*. Warszawa 2004, pp. 105-114, M. Chmaj, W. Sokół, M. Żmigrodzki, *Teoria partii politycznych*. Lublin 1999, pp. 127-138.

²²⁶ M. Bankowicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 187-188.

According to Gordon Smith's classification, the current party system of the analyzed country should be described as dispersed. There are several active parties, some of them are present in the parliament, but none has a position strong enough to dominate the scene.

An attempt to classify parties has been proposed by Giovanni Sartori who introduced the concept of relevance of parties, by which he means the ability to obtain representation in parliament, the possibility to enter into governing coalitions (coalition potential), and the ability to influence the events of the political scene through political blackmail²²⁷. Relevancy in the Czech party system ranged in 2010 from 4 to 6 parties in the Chamber of Deputies. After the election of 2013 it amounts to 7. In the absence of clearly dominant groups, practically any of the parties that are in the parliament theoretically can become a coalition partner.

Taking into account the quantitative and qualitative criteria Wojciech Sokół formulated the thesis that after the elections of 1998 and 2002 in the Czech Republic a moderately multi-party system with two major parties (ODS and ČSSD) was formed. In turn, after the elections of 1992 it was an extremely multi-party system with one dominant party (ODS), and after the elections of 1996 an extremely multi-party system with two major parties (ODS and ČSSD)²²⁸.

Referring to the criteria adopted by Sokół after the elections in 2006 the system should also be described as moderately multiparty with two main formations. In turn, after the elections of 2010 and 2013 it was an extremely multi-party system, again with the two main parties. The main difference, indicating at the same time the dynamics of change lies in the fact that in the last election ODS was substituted by ANO 2011 movement.

These terms clearly implies that the party system of the Republic is subject to changes. They cause classification problems, provoke scientific discussion, primarily because of the noticeable peculiarities²²⁹. This justifies the need for a study on classification criteria, both quantitative and qualitative.

5. Prospects for the development of the political scene

²²⁷ K. Sobolewska-Myślik, *op. cit.*, pp. 109-110; M. Chmaj, W. Sokół, M. Żmigrodzki, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

²²⁸ W. Sokół, *Transformacja ustrojowa państw Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej – próba bilansu*. [in:] W. Sokół, M. Żmigrodzki (ed.), *Systemy polityczne państw Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej*. Lublin 2005, pp. 63-64.

²²⁹ P. Fiala, V. Hloušek, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-61.

Further development of the party scene of the Czech Republic will depend on many factors, both internal and external. The Czech society seems to be more and more skeptical about the European integration, participation of the country in the European Union and entering the euro zone. This can cause the deepening of divisions on the political scene.

In public opinion polls conducted in September 2013 only 28% of respondents defined the membership in the EU as positive (26% as negative, 39% as neither positive nor negative). 6% strongly favoured the euro, 12% were rather in favour, but as many as 48% were strongly opposed and 28% rather opposed²³⁰. These results are to some extent a consequence of the economic crisis in Europe which also affected the Czech Republic. The new government, although emphasizing that it represents a more open attitude towards the integration and the euro²³¹, will have to conduct its policies in a very balanced way and will have to take into account the lack of social support in some issues.

It cannot be ruled out that an internal factor which might affect the development of the party scene in the future will be political ambitions of President Miloš Zeman, the first president of the Republic after the 1989 direct elections. According to some opinions he will aim at exercising a significant influence on the most important areas of public policy, which certainly does not contribute to the stability of coalition governments²³².

The most important issues affecting the stability of governments include a relatively weak support for the strongest parties. In practice, this resulted, after the last election, in the impossibility to create a government by two largest groups, which was an unprecedented event. The lack of a one decidedly leading party on the political scene does not contribute to its stability, especially at the government level.

It is impossible not to mention deeply negative perception of political parties and politicians by the society, which is the consequence of frequent scandals, including corruption. Public opinion surveys, conducted in March 2013 show that 73% of respondents believe that taking bribes and corruption are widespread among most, if not all, public servants. In answer

²³⁰ *Hodnocení členství v EU a postoj k euru v střeoevropském srovnání – léto 2013*. http://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/media/com_form2content/documents/c1/a7097/f3/pm131009.pdf, 17.08.2014. The Czechs have become the most euro sceptic of all the societies of the Visegrad Group.

²³¹ *Czechy nawracają się na wiarę w Unię Europejską*. „Gazeta Wyborcza”, 3rd Februar 2014.

²³² D. Kašan, *W stronę „republiki prezydenckiej”? Czechy po wyborach parlamentarnych*. „Biuletyn PISM” no 112 (1088), 28th October 2013.

to the question asking in which institutions of public life these negative phenomena are widespread the disgraceful first place was granted to political parties (on a scale of 1 to 5, where 5 is the highest level of corruption, 54% of those asked claimed that among the parties it is just 5, and 25% said it was 4)²³³.

The problem of corruption was also recognized in the Eurobarometer surveys in 2013. The Czech Republic is among these countries of the European Union in which it poses the biggest problem²³⁴. What is worse, the Czech society has witnessed the increase of corruption in recent years. Undoubtedly, this is an important internal factor which the political scene will have to face in the coming years.

6. Summary

The Czech Republic party system is the result of changes that occurred after 1989. A multi-party system has emerged without any dominant group. This is confirmed by the results of the elections to the Chamber of Deputies in 2013 and the negotiations on forming a coalition government.

One can therefore speak of the fragmentation of the political scene, which in the future will probably cause further problems associated with government coalitions. Dissatisfaction of the noticeable part of the voters contribute to their support of newly established parties, as exemplified by Andrej Babiš's ANO 2011 and Úsvit movement. In the future, the emergence of more new groups on the political scene can not be ruled out. To what extent they will be able to take responsibility for the process of governing the state is still an open question.

In my opinion, it is justified to define the party system of the Czech Republic as a system with a far-reaching stabilization but, at the same time, still exhibiting dynamic

²³³ *Názor na rozšířenost a míru korupce u veřejných činitelů a institucí – březen 2013.* http://cvvm.soc.cas.cz/media/com_form2content/documents/c1/a7001/f3/po130425.pdf, 30.07.2014. Next places in this classification are occupied by ministries and central offices. The best opinion enjoy: education, banking and financial institutions, and municipal offices.

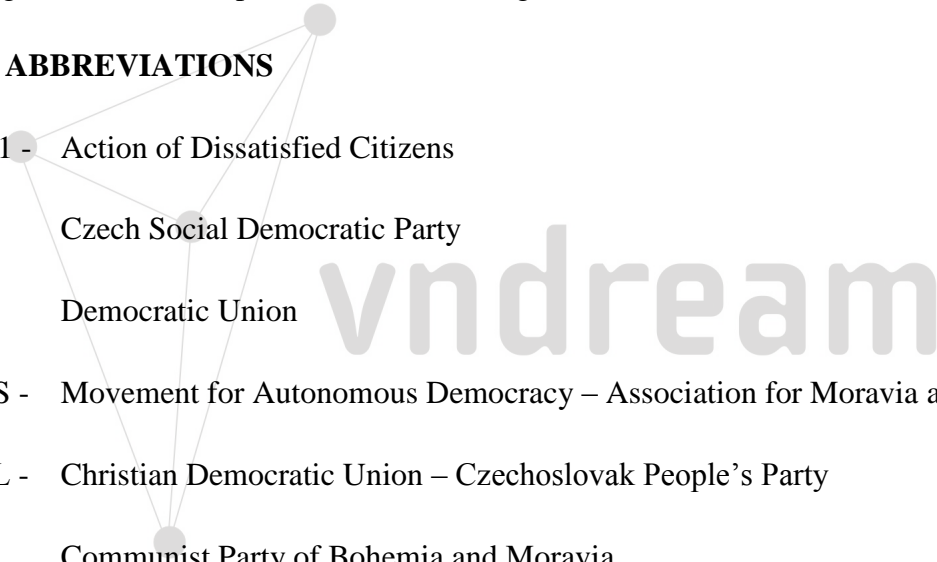
²³⁴ *Special Eurobarometer 397. Corruption Report 2013.* http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_397_en.pdf, 20.08.2014.

features. It is characterised by organizational changeability, tendency to splits, and finally, the emergence of new political structures²³⁵.

The system is also marked by the existence of a multitude of political parties represented in the parliament (now 7, in the past even 8), the dispersion of the electorate and - what is worth noting as a feature clearly distinguishing it from other states of the central part of the continent – a relatively strong position of the parties often appealing directly to the communist ideology.

In the future, this system will probably undergo further evolution for one can hardly define it as permanently formed. The direction of development will probably depend, as mentioned, not only on the internal but also on the external events. They can influence even further fragmentation of the political scene, although this scenario seems the least likely.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS



ANO 2011 -	Action of Dissatisfied Citizens
ČSSD -	Czech Social Democratic Party
DEU -	Democratic Union
HSD-SMS -	Movement for Autonomous Democracy – Association for Moravia and Silesia
KDU-ČSL -	Christian Democratic Union – Czechoslovak People's Party
KSČM -	Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia
LSU -	Liberal-Social Union
NEI -	Independent Erotic Initiative
ODA -	Civic Democratic Alliance
ODS -	Civic Democratic Party
OF -	Civic Forum
SPP -	Beer-Lovers Party

²³⁵ W. Sokół, *System polityczny Czech*. [in:] W. Sokół, M. Żmigrodzki (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 253. Úsvit movement is an example of organizational change in recent years as being represented mostly by the candidates who are former members of the VV group.

SPR-RSČ - Association for the Republic – Republican Party of Czechoslovakia

SZ - Green Party

TOP 09 - Tradition, Responsibility, Prosperity

US - Freedom Union

Úsvit - Dawn of Direct Democracy

VV - Public Affairs



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From the green movement to a party THE Effect of the crisis and democratic movements in Hungary²³⁶

Abstract

General political, economic and moral crises began in Hungary in 2006, after the prime minister's speech about the real state of the Hungarian economy was delivered. Fidesz, the then largest opposition party refused any further cooperation with the government and started to attack the governing socialist-liberal coalition. After four years of permanent campaign against the socialists, Fidesz won the elections in 2010 and started to rearrange the whole political and social system in Hungary. Parallel to that, the appearance of social movements in Hungary can clearly be understood as a reply to crisis phenomena, whether they are left-leaning organisations, green-ecological, critical of globalisation ("globecrit") or far-right, fascistoid groups and networks. One part of the green-ecological movement was formed into a party and was named as Politics Can Be Different (LMP), but after 2010 other organizations appeared such as Szolidaritás, an organisation established with reference to the Polish example, with a trade union background, Milla (One Million for Press Freedom), 4K (Movement for the Fourth Republic) and HaHa (Students' Network), the Hungarian Two-tailed Dog Party (MKKP) and the Hungarian Pirate Party.

²³⁶ This chapter appeared in Politeja 28, 2014 Journal of the Faculty of International and Political Studies of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków

Introduction

Beginning from the 2000s, many “colour revolutions” have taken place all over the world. The multicolour movements demanding change organised themselves around several themes, but they had the common attitude of taking a commitment against the more and more visible crisis phenomena. The demands had common characteristics, such as the increasingly harsh criticism of globalisation and the objectives of replacing governments with authoritarian/semi-authoritarian features and increasing the transparency of political decisions. The protests following the Seattle WTO Summit of 1999 (Prague, Genoa, Davos, Madrid, Copenhagen) were embedded in the process of the upheaval of globalisation criticism, and then the movements of groups protesting against corruption and authoritarian practices in post-socialist countries (Serbia, Georgia, Belarus, Ukraine, Azerbaijan) projected the appearance of a new generation. An analysis of the Arab Spring that still invokes unpredictable consequences and extremely complex political relations showed the interactions of modernisation and globalisation appearing in the periphery, with religion and traditions. Internet (and especially Facebook) played a major role in the development of the continuously transforming movements and in the escalation of events. Members received information through social media sites, organised themselves and rapidly reacted to developments. Therefore, the movements involved virtual communities in which disputes continuously took place and the changes of the members’ positions could be measured.

The appearance of social movements in Hungary can clearly be understood as a response to crisis phenomena, whether they are left-leaning organisations, green-ecological, critics of globalisation (“globcrit”) or far-right, fascistoid groups and networks. In this study, I concentrate on democratic, single-issue movements operating in a democratic manner, founded after the 2000s. The study focuses on the surge of the Hungarian green movement and its organisation into a party (Politics Can Be Different – Lehet Más a Politika – LMP), but is also affects the history of Szolidaritás, an organisation established with reference to the Polish example, with a trade union background, Milla (One Million for Press Freedom – Egymillióan a magyar sajtószabadságért), 4K (Movement for the Fourth Republic – Negyedik Köztársaság Mozgalom) and HaHa (Students’ Network – Hallgatói Hálózat), and the appearance of such organisations as the Hungarian Two-tailed Dog Party (Magyar Kétfarkú

Kutya Párt – MKKP) and the Pirate Party (Kalózpárt). In my essay, I often refer to far-right/radical movements but do not elaborate on them in detail because their complexity and depth could be the subject of a separate study.

Crises and movements – theoretical outlook

The ever more frequent and deeper changes (and the chains thereof) appearing simultaneously with the process of globalisation, political and economic crises, are often unpredictable, unexpected and cause uncertainty in both people in general, and decision-makers in particular. According to theories on change, it is primarily the acting individuals (and not the groups) that have motivations, plans and interests that can be negotiated with other acting individuals for the purpose of enforcing interests of a group or the development of the group. However, the relationships of the actors and the consequences of actions are systems with multiple components, and they can swiftly disappear or reappear in case of a crisis situation. Dahrendorf emphasises²³⁷ that this is exactly the reason why a group's actions, social and political changes of structure have to be connected with persons and personal abilities to understand the system process and the factors causing changes. He considers the development of norms and values a change of structure, while according to him the change of roles and relations in an unchanged system of norms and values is adaptation. According to the theories of social changes²³⁸, social systems inevitably wish to provide resources for their survival – even at the expense of others, while economic interest has an interest in finding a place for their operation that offers a stable political system and legal background. If this is impossible or hindered by obstacles, the structure has to be changed, or certain elements of the structure have to be strengthened to enable a change in the future. The ability to innovate may provide an adequate answer thereto, by assisting in the solution of crisis situations. Social or political and economic innovation can be successful, where the adequate intellectual capital and human resources meet the will, initiative, capital and political support.

Currently, the neoliberal economic system ruling in a large part of the world is hindered by increasing and more extreme social contradictions, and its operation is limited by crises and ecological limitations. However, system malfunctions shall not be confused with efforts aiming to change it. Upon reviewing the history of the aforementioned movements in the 2000s, we shall agree to the statement that political and economic crises are properties of the system, and they shall not be considered symptoms of its change. Thus, the battles for

²³⁷ R. Dahrendorf, *A modern társadalmi konfliktus*, Budapest 1994, pp. 102-104.

²³⁸ W. Zapf, *Modernizáció, jólét, átmenet*, Budapest 2002, p. 21.

positions in the dominant economic-political circles do not affect the framework of the system in the long run.²³⁹

Social changes are only partially instructible, controllable and measureable, as they stem from the aggregation of complex processes. They are rather predictable and spontaneous interlacements of processes. Therefore, the changes are cyclical; they consist of accelerating and decelerating phases, sometimes being open to innovation, sometimes expecting patience. It is also doubtful whether innovations and developments contribute positively to social development, and their effects and consequences are dubious. Multivariate processes almost exclude the possibility of unified reference frameworks; new paradigms are related to paradox phenomena and signs of a crisis.²⁴⁰ Bell also emphasised that it is not the central, top-down initiatives that are the most innovative, but the locally organised, grassroots actions, programmes, cooperations that ensure the presence of locality and civil courage, while being based on personal cooperation at the same time.²⁴¹

The reason for the creation of social movements is the inadequacy of organisational-institutional structures in the society to satisfy new types of social demands and to manage new social problems. Thus, the movement takes a stance for or against the existing system, rejecting, criticising, and channeling the current state.²⁴² It is an elementary accessory for an operating democracy (and a good measurement to the degree thereof) to have a viable and effective non-governmental sector.

The major traditional social rifts, which were typical till the 1960s, partially lost their significance until the 1980s. Partially new, previously non-existing conflicts appeared and transformed the party system and the non-governmental sector. Usually, these conflicts of the developed world were not absolute in their nature, they did not question the existing regime, but aimed to reduce injustice in the distribution of standards of living, to transform power structures and to fight for second and third generation rights or the protection of the private sphere. With the development of the welfare state, real class conflicts lost their meaning, while new kinds of eligibility problems arose. The romantic ideal of gaining rights did not invigorate certain social groups anymore, and the appearance of mass parties and collective parties rendered ideological clashes obsolete. However, new types of eligibility problems arose, such as the threats to natural environment, the decay of living standards (especially

²³⁹ Artner, A., *Globalizáció alulnézetben – Elnyomott csoportok – lázadó mozgalmak*, Budapest 2006, p. 103.

²⁴⁰ T. Kuosa, *Towards the Dynamic Paradigm of Futures Research*, 2009.

²⁴¹ D. Bell, *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society: a Venture in Social Forecasting*, Budapest 1973, pp. 64-67.

²⁴² Szabó, M., *Társadalmi mozgalmak és politikai tiltakozás*, Budapest 2001, p. 62.

urban life), the dissolution of traditional communities, and the primacy of economic interests. As consequences of the slow dissolution of welfare institutions, the appearance of the new exclusion (new poverty), the increase of income disparities, the problems of redistribution, the sharp increase of utility prices affected everybody, and started to mobilise everyone to a certain extent, whether they were proponents of post-material values or members of globalization-sceptic groups. With the disappearance of classes, interest groups, civil society organizations and movements have appeared to more profoundly represent partial interests, and they have participated in social-political life as a new mediating medium, and a sphere of social action.²⁴³

By the 1990s, the rapid development of information technology systems operating production systems created such knowledge-based information societies that can acquire enormous quantities of information via new communication channels, and may exchange and provide information at the same time. It enables people to join movements and networks virtually (not just materially) and to communicate their opinions in matters affecting them. New forms of participation and persuasion are discovered every day, and the media, political and business sectors work to cover these channels as much as possible.

The change the social movements wish to bring about aims at such a social structure that is displayed in the symbols and texts of the movement. Activists of the social movements are connected by their own movement identities that are usually very complex, having multiple elements and typically relate to one issue (single issue) or a group of similar cases. They are connected to the specific issue by their identities and common sets of values, and differentiate and isolate themselves from their enemies, neutral actors, and relate to their allies. The movement is a meeting of different identities, and therefore a conscious identity-building and community-constructing process.²⁴⁴

Action is the individual's freedom of choice, in which the goals, means and situations of action define the framework of the action. The utilitarian dilemma shows an important condition: the hierarchy and importance of partial goals may change, but the action continues until the reason creating the action is eliminated or the goal is realised (Habermas, 2011). Collective behaviour theory is based on the behaviourist understanding of social processes, applied to the examination of social phenomena that include some kind of collective action, like panic, mass hysteria, strike or the social movements themselves. According to the

²⁴³ R. Dahrendorf, *A modern társadalmi konfliktus*, Budapest 1994.

²⁴⁴ A. Melucci, *Challenging Codes. Collective Action in the Information Age*, Budapest 1996, pp. 135-139.

collective behaviour theory, these forms are only different in their appearances, their logic has a common origin, and therefore their analysis may also be conducted in a similar manner. However, these forms of collective behaviour show a confused operation of the social system, they are created as a result of some social tension or error, hindering the normal operation of society and creating an anomic state. The theory considers the discontent of the individuals to be the direct cause of collective behaviour.²⁴⁵ In case of collective action, the competent individuals interact with like-minded companions and align the principles of their actions. During the course of the process, participants of the collective action articulate their suggestions not only for themselves, but also for others, and try to persuade them about the rightness of their way. If we accept that their decisions are guided by logic and possess rational bases together with arguments and general norms being accepted by the society or its subgroups, then the claim can be justified that social movements are communities acting for or against a certain change, with some kind of continuity. There are completely different examples regarding the sections, schedules, ideological background, goals and means of this change, ranging from revolutionary to conservative and the divisions are often unclear.

Social movements are less institutional organisations than parties, less stable in their ideologies and their philosophical system is not completely clear (or they lack a general ideology completely). Therefore, the theory of interpreting frameworks (*frame analysis*) is the ideal tool to study movements beyond their organisational properties. However, *frame* does not simply replace ideology, but its auxiliary property is very significant. The authors differentiate between three types of social movements: value-oriented, participation-oriented and power-oriented movements. During the development of a movement, it is a serious dilemma to decide which actions take place in the frame of the political system (inducing reforms) and which step over the framework, setting the demand to change the political system as their objective. This issue accompanies the development of the non-governmental sector (and, simultaneously, the ecological movement, for example), causing a crisis of values, division or dissolution in many cases. In case of value-oriented movements, it means reaching a certain social change. Members of the power-oriented movement aim to take over legitimate social institutions, without wanting to change them, so they intend to become relevant elements of the political system within the provided political framework. Participation-oriented movements wish to satisfy the needs of their members and do not

²⁴⁵ Mikecz, D., *Az ellenállás kultúrája. Kultúra, identitás a mozgalmakutatás kultúrájában*, Budapest 2010, pp. 110-112.

articulate general programmes for the wider society. It is useful to study the arguments of Ted Robert Gurr and Monty G. Marshall (2005) based on conflict analysis, about the circumstances of the birth and development of movements. According to this, new ideologies are created during socially tense conflicts and discontent, to provide a more acceptable justification to political changes. In the new approach to the system, previously existing social tensions and conflicts are articulated, whether they are social, political – or increasingly more often – environmental. The theory and action frameworks and concepts insisting on change, however, only develop gradually. In the beginning, they do not require complex ideology, it is rather the vague theories, symbols and buzzwords that are acquired by the followers, and then they adapt to opportunities and open the way to new directions, simultaneously with developing and carrying on original ideas. The leaders of the movements have to find common elements, normative conceptual ranges that hold together and guide the heterogeneous groups. This differentiates them from spontaneous mass protests. The decision to challenge the system and generate a conflict triggers a reaction from governmental and non-governmental actors as well. The form of solving conflicts provides the degree of democratic quality of the specific political structure and culture.²⁴⁶

The reason for the creation of social movements is the crisis of the complete social system or certain elements thereof. The crisis leads to the questioning of the whole system responsible for the crisis and looking for opportunities to form alternative answers. The introduction of alternatives (or the intentions thereof) can be performed in various ways, from violent revolutions to negotiated agreements. Since not every crisis leads to the creation of a movement, it is important to examine the mechanisms of articulating social interests and the so-called flip-over point, when certain social groups present and disclose the reasons of the crisis and provide alternative solutions. After raising awareness, in case the social-political system lacks a problem-solving reaction, the action to eliminate the reasons for the crisis is articulated.

The movements may be mobilised by opportunities or threats as well. However, their activity is reduced when these two circumstances are only slightly present. In a period when there is only a minor chance of a change (either a positive or a negative one), the willingness of groups to initiate protest actions is low.²⁴⁷ When the protest becomes public, it triggers response reactions from the international community on a global scale, and from the

²⁴⁶ Ibid., pp. 115-121.

²⁴⁷ Szabó, M., *Társadalmi mozgalmak és politikai tiltakozás*, Budapest 2001, p. 23.

government and its bodies on a local level, and forces them to intervene. Depending on the level of the crisis, the depth of the intervention, its direction and level of interaction with the movement activism, confrontation lead to the reaching of an agreement, or to the institutionalisation of the solution mechanisms of the crisis. The effect of the movement may increase with successful attempts and the modification of the level of crisis, or it may decrease, or fail utterly due to organisational and leadership problems. Nevertheless, if the crisis persists, the appearance of new and usually more radical movements can be expected. Many factors (the crisis and cynicism of the political system, dissolution of traditional social structures, a change in the economy or the environment or the knowledge of a future change, etc.) may result in the appearance of social activism, and the different forms of protests related to it. This is not universally caused by the legitimacy crisis of the government and the actors of the economy, but it is true in the case of Hungary, where doubts were raised regarding the legitimacy of the political elite. According to Habermas, when certain elements of life become interwoven with politics, social relations become bureaucratic, and there is an increased opportunity for increased citizen activity and the creation of alternative, new movements. According to him, the ultimate goal of the social movements is to end the colonisation of life, and the most important means to do so is protest. The reason for this is that crisis situations push the activities of citizens toward retreat or activism. On the activist side, the certain new social movements appear which are usually presented by feminist, green, pacifist, globalisation sceptic and student movements. Protest is their operating environment, means, source of identity and indicator of effectiveness.²⁴⁸

Dilemma

According to Ralph Dahrendorf (1994), the main risk of democratic processes is that the movement does not undertake continuing political activity, fearing that it would become an actor and “accomplice” of the political elite. Inertia freezes the movement. When resistance does not break legal boundaries, and when cooperation is defined by the corporative cooperation of the government and partial interests. This complicates changes and the entry of new actors to the field of democratic competition, and it may weaken the power of radical initiatives, but it may also the realisation of goals through cooperation and to the increase of chances of reaching an agreement.

²⁴⁸ J. Habermas, *Válogatott tanulmányok*, 1994.

Challenges to movements often (but not exclusively) arise inside the sphere of civil society, where the areas of resistance are formed somewhat independently from the state, but with the intention to influence it. Thus, civil society shall also be considered an area of struggle, public and political processes regarding the actions, where conflicts are also created among norms and identities.²⁴⁹ Movements not only direct attention to crisis phenomena, but they also intend to counter them. They perform some kind of permanent criticism of society, in which not only resistance, conflict and retreat are represented, but also the clash of interest and arguments based on institutionalised cooperation.²⁵⁰

Situation analysis

In Hungary, the crisis has already begun in 2006 and it is practically still around today, in 2013. The election campaign in 2006 was all about promises. The then governing socialist/free democrat coalition communicated the temporary rise of living standards with success propaganda and successfully referred to the country's accession to the European Union 2004, while the largest opposition party, the self-proclaimed right-wing Fidesz (*Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége – Alliance of Young Democrats*) used a depressive campaign (with the main slogan being: “we live worse than four years ago”) that utterly failed. However, some months after the elections, the re-elected governing parties practically shocked the public by introducing certain austerity measures. The public was also surprised to learn that the growth of the previous years was practically financed by loans, and repayment requires significant corrections in the budget. The already negative public perception exploded when a confidential speech of prime minister Ferenc Gyurcsány was leaked, in which he admitted that the government lied to the voters about the country's state and they only conducted “apparent governing” in the last years. The speech was disclosed on 17 September 2006 and it led to street riots. The protesters took over the headquarters of the Hungarian Television, set cars on fire and clashed with police in several areas of Budapest. The anti-government protests, organised mostly by the right-wing parties, continued all around the country until the elections in 2010. This time, policy issues were not discussed, the main question was whether early elections would take place, or the prime minister would be replaced by the governing parties. Taking advantage of the government's sharp loss of popularity, Fidesz started a powerful campaign to present the prime minister as illegitimate and to reject all forms of

²⁴⁹ Mező, F., *A társadalmi mozgalmak és az ellenállás területei*, Budapest 1999, p. 1186.

²⁵⁰ Boda, Zs., *Globális ököpolitika*, Budapest 2004, pp. 180-181.

cooperation with Mr. Gyurcsány or the coalition parties. A lasting period of political crisis began that brought about a moral and ethical crisis. The socialists could not escape their network of interests and cases of corruption and their politics could only focus on remaining in power. The corruption scandals, and ambitious, but nevertheless futile attempts at reform were the main characteristics of the dead-end politics of the government. After losing a referendum, conducted regarding social questions in 2008, it could only keep its power, but lost the opportunity to perform any important government actions. The country was in such a state, when the credit crisis originating in the US reached its borders in 2008. It had an elementary impact on the otherwise weak and decreasing Hungarian economy. Unemployment raised sharply, the prices of utilities increased, and financial collapse was only avoided with the assistance of an IMF loan acquired in October of 2008. In spring the governing coalition was dissolved, the free democrats quit the alliance and the rapid collapse of the liberal party soon began. The popularity of the socialists did not decrease drastically, as it had already hit bottom in early 2008, stagnating between 18-22 percent. After all this, there was no doubt that Fidesz, the largest opposition party, was the main contender in the 2010 elections. The overwhelming majority of voters wanted changes; part of the votes could be considered protest votes, not primarily aimed to support Fidesz that participated in the politics of the twenty years after the transition to democracy.



The building of the Hungarian Television under “siege” in 2006

Source: <http://www.indymedia.org/or/2006/09/847163.shtml>

The far-right, national radical Jobbik (*Jobbik Magyarországért Mozgalom – Movement for a Better Hungary*) also gained support. Although it was established as a party in 2003, it could

only present itself after 2006, as the crisis deepened. As hopelessness and poverty increased, many became attracted to the party, which gave vent to antidemocratic, anti-EU, anti-Semitic and racist sentiments, invoking the attitude of Hungary in the 1930s, that was also supported by an intellectual group consisting of lawyers. Jobbik introduced the issues of the Roma minority and the fight against global capital into national politics, although these used to be taboo and it also gave expression to social concerns, gaining support especially in the poorer regions of Eastern Hungary. A new party also appeared in the centre and a little left to the centre, in the liberal-green-anarchist field, introducing fresh air and young dynamism, which immediately resulted in a 5% national support. *Politics Can Be Different* – LMP was a party organised on a civil society base, registered in 2009, with followers including greens, anarchists, liberals, supporters of the alterglob movement, conservatives and new left sympathisers as well. The new force contributing to policy issues apparently came from nothing and gained ground swiftly, in not more than a year. Since neither the free democrats, nor the winners of the first democratic elections (*Magyar Demokrata Fórum* – MDF – *Hungarian Democratic Forum*) could introduce a valid party-list in the elections, they did not win any seats in the national assembly. The winner of the election was Fidesz and its allies, the Christian Democrats, having a two-third majority, followed by the MSZP (*Magyar Szocialista Párt* – *Hungarian Socialist Party*), Jobbik in the third place and LMP also winning seats in parliament. Although the results of the European Parliament elections in 2009 were similar, the election results of 2010 surprised many. The bipolar, two-party party system broke up, the so-called left-wing socialist-liberal block was beaten, and Fidesz could practically begin to transform economic and social subsystems without an opposition.

Green and globalisation-critical movement in Hungary

From the mid-1980s, new types of action-centric organisations started to appear in Hungary, making their voice heard primarily in environmental issues. In the second half of the decade the green movement became an important platform of expression of social discontent with the communist regime, and the case of the Gabčíkovo–Nagymaros Dam was an excellent issue for them²⁵¹. In 1984, the Danube Circle was founded, which hosted a lively discussion about environmental issues, and current social, political issues as well. When the policy of the

²⁵¹ Due to protests from local environment activists and the crisis of the Hungarian economy, the government unilaterally shut down the construction of the barrage project with Czechoslovakia, and terminated the contract thereof in 1989.

government regarding the dam changed (the Hungarian party terminated the construction in 1989), the nature of the conflict changed; demonstrations and forums stopped when the general elections of 1990 were nearing. The opposition moved primarily from the relations of the state and the society to foreign relations. In the new institutional system and party structure formed after the transition to democracy, the green movement only had a marginal role, especially because it could not provide answers to social and economic issues directly affecting the people, partially because the formation of parties assisted the organisation of “movements” with significant supporter base, as in the cases of SZDSZ (*Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége – Alliance of Free Democrats*), MDF and Fidesz.²⁵² Some of the most popular persons in the green movement entered politics in the newly formed parties, while others moved on to the academic sector. The main issues of the years following the transition to democracy were mitigating the damages of the polluting communist era and the rapid changes of the economy and the society, effectively marginalising the protection of the environment. Although the Gabčíkovo–Nagymaros Dam was an important issue in the late 1980s, it failed to gain such importance after the fall of communism as the nuclear energy issues in Germany, that could unite the green, antiglob and pacifist movements, forming a movement-based, new left related network.²⁵³ The “glamour” of the swift transition to capitalist market economy and freedom diverted attention from the importance of the environment, and members of society were occupied by issues of consumption and growth. The majority of the people identified democratic transition with welfare, the appearance of basic rights was considered obvious, and wealth appeared in form of quantity rather than quality. The activities of ecological movements soon extended from being strictly environment-based: its thinkers recognised that based on the “everything is related to everything” principle, these problems cannot be solved in isolation from other tensions (consumer lifestyle, social justice, human rights, etc.) of the modern society.²⁵⁴ In the 1990s, several polls showed that society considers the protection of the environment important, but it cannot and it is not willing to spend money on it. It considers environmental organisations weak, but trusts them much more than other sectors. It is also very meaningful to see that 74% of respondents considered the government an actor that is able to solve environmental problems and shall be responsible for protecting the environment. This clearly shows the statist attitude of the average Hungarian citizen, *the paternalist thinking and dependency attitude*, which are the heritage of the political elitism

²⁵² Szabó, M., *A zöld mozgalmak és polgári kezdeményezések Magyarországon: kutatási problémák, módszertan, elmélet*, Budapest 1999, p. 16.

²⁵³ Mikecz, D., *Új pártok, változó mozgalmak*, Budapest 2012, p. 72.

²⁵⁴ Móra, V., *A zöldek (környezet-, természet- és állatvédő szervezetek)*, Budapest 2008, p. 120.

institutionalised in the 19th century, the right-wing authoritarian system, socialism after 1948 and the transition to democracy. Citizens were originally divided in environmental issues, giving priority to economic growth, creation of jobs, material (consumption) security. The development of the green movement was also hindered by the lack of alternative methods of mobilising the masses (different from the principles of the economic-political system) or protest forms limiting the market, and no general national organisation was formed for uniting experimental, alternative initiatives different from the mainstream. The reason for this was mainly the existence of a different set of values and motives of the representatives of the movement, and also the existing personal conflicts. In this period, the media presented the greens as obstacles to development, spiritual idealists, parasites, etc. Also, members of the movement feared for their livelihood, and in many cases did not oppose polluting corporations and did not report those. If they did, they were likely to find themselves in slander and libel proceedings. In the 1990–2000 period, the enforcement of interests stagnated, even though the non-governmental sector rapidly extended,²⁵⁵ and the number of environmental NGOs also increased.²⁵⁶

In the late 1990s, the green movement became important again, when the case of the dam was put back on the agenda in 1997, after a meeting of prime ministers Gyula Horn and Vladimir Mečiar. The ongoing protests (Danube Charter) influenced the outcome of the elections in 1998 and played a role in the defeat in the socialist/free democrat coalition. With regard to this, after environmental conflicts caused by some major investments in Budapest and other cities, the green movements seemed to be able to build social support from their success in local issues that would provide an opportunity for integration and collective efforts. This did not materialise however, and the frequently mentioned “*Saint Florian principle*” remained valid. This means that green movements only focused on local ecological problems and did not have the power or the opportunity to influence national issues.²⁵⁷ Heterogeneity caused a fragmentation of the movement rather than prove a common identity, as it was clearly seen from the early 2000s. Mistrust did not only affect the government, but also the relations of each other as well, especially related to the opening of the EU tenders and the establishment of partnership agreements.

²⁵⁵ Kákai, L., *Önkormányzunk értetek, de nélkületek!*, 2004.

²⁵⁶ Currently, there are 1400 ecological NGOs in Hungary (Móra, V., 2008, pp. 120-121.).

²⁵⁷ Szabó, M., *A zöld mozgalmak és polgári kezdeményezések Magyarországon: kutatási problémák, módszertan, elmélet*, Budapest 1999.

The 2000s and networking

The 2000s brought about serious changes in the life of the green movement. Greenpeace, the organisation well-known for its radicalism and direct actions opened its office in Hungary, among other major transnational organisations that started international and European campaigns in the country.²⁵⁸ Globalisation and “Europeanisation” appeared in the life of the Hungarian non-governmental sector, the Hungarian organisations became members of networks and umbrella organisations. This caused the adoption of certain patterns, and could increase resources temporarily (due to foreign foundations and other grants, cooperations - in a human and financial sense as well). In Hungary, the problem of global climate change entered scientific research and public discourse in the early 2000s. The greens thought that it is an issue that can connect global commitments with local actions.²⁵⁹

The establishment of the regulations that opened the way to the participation and requesting of Phare-funds (and to spending them), opened new or informal partnership relations and cooperation opportunities to the NGOs. The civil sector recognised that in a collective effort they can influence decision-making more, actively participate in reviewing EU and national operative and action programmes, and in rationalising the allocation of EU funds later on. Therefore, more closely cooperating, formal and informal civil networks became much more important to prepare for the accession to the EU and to participate in creating development programmes as a new member country. From 2004, social participation became much more active than before, as earlier the NGOs had protests as the only means (against developments considered environmentally harmful), but in the social discussion of EU-programme preparations they could participate as actors of recommendation/decision-making. The greens were among those actively supporting such cooperations, and participated in the establishment and development of civil participation as catalysts. Participation beginning from 2004-2005 shall be considered a mutual learning process (although different for each region or town) that could turn the Hungarian NGOs to major pressure groups. It was a question whether actors of the Hungarian civil sector – based on their properties – could fill

²⁵⁸ Such as the climate act campaign in 2009-2010. <http://www.klimatorveny.hu/>

²⁵⁹ Some prominent green leaders think this issue is overemphasised and defeats all other issues.

their traditional roles among society and decision-makers, and could be service providers ensuring professional knowledge that allows them to become actors and participants (and not just spectators) of the medium and long term processes affecting society and focusing on sustainable development.²⁶⁰ To answer this question, we could mention that the civil sector is clearly an actor of decision-making processes, but in different cases it is only moderately able to shape those and to enforce its interests. The commonly mentioned cooperation-learning process seems to restart from time to time, as actors often change and there is fluctuation in the public administration bodies. Contrary to several recommendations concerning participation, models and research detailing the advantages of exemplary, progressive participation; participation is in most cases formal and can only be successful in so-called *soft* issues (such as strategy development, recommendations during planning, etc.). In *hard* issues, such as billion HUF value investments, participation is unwanted. I think that discussion on participation is itself a soft issue, as it diverts attention from actually important issues. It serves as a valve to social issues and a decoy as well, providing a fighting arena to decision-makers and other political actors.

After 2005, the structure of the green movement was established with its inner processes “fixed”: cooperation defined by formal and informal rules was stabilised, and became a routine in most cases. This ensures unified and somewhat rapid enforcement of interests – e.g. during common statements, press releases – that is the key to the organisation of the movement and probably its greatest strength. However, social embeddedness remained low, and the membership base of the movement was “overused” by the mid-2000s. The so-called second generation, with people in their twenties and thirties included the message of networking in themselves as a generational attitude, as the usage of the internet and other communication channels as well. According to Veronika Móra, although this increased their popularity, the role of the protection of the environment did not increase in society.²⁶¹ This is on the one hand a consequence of post-environmentalism, as organisations newly created after the transformation of legal order, after the transition to democracy found that creating environmental regulations (and the systems thereof) was more important than increasing social embeddedness. On the other hand, the post-material set of values spreads much slower, the majority of the society considers consumption supported by multinationals to be of value, “casting their votes in supermarkets rather than in the public sphere”. As the majority of the public turned away from politics, they also turned away from public affairs. Indifference, a

²⁶⁰ Glied, V., *Civil szervezetek szerepe a környezeti ügyekben a dél-dunántúli régióban*, 2009, p. 70.

²⁶¹ Móra, V., *A zöldek (környezet-, természet- és állatvédő szervezetek)*, Budapest 2008, pp. 122-123.

low level of individual responsibility, mistrust, turning away from the real to the virtual are all factors that hinder the spread of green ideology and values.



Cyanide pollution of River Tisza in 2000

Source: <http://www.yubanet.com>

Nevertheless, the cyanide pollution of the Tisza river, floods on the Danube and the Tisza, the problems of polders, problems related to the pollution and constructions on the beaches of the Balaton, the multiplication of weather anomalies, increasing urban smog, the foam pollution of the Rába and the red mud catastrophe are all warning signs to the public. “The single issue” remained valid in this period (with a few exceptions), but the space for permanent cooperation also appeared via different forums. The establishment of a negotiation structure was initiated by the government, and it is therefore a top-down process, even though the organisation of the forums and the works therein were performed by the participating organisations. The EU requires the member states to enforce the principles included in the 2001 “White Book” on European governance, issued by the European Commission (such as openness, inclusion and highlight role of NGOs in consultation processes, accountability, efficiency and consistency).²⁶² The White Book declares that there is no contradiction between the concepts of wide consultations and representative democracy. It is a requirement of good governance that effective communication is established with the affected parties, and NGOs have a major

²⁶² Pánovics, A., *Régiós civil fejlesztési források felé – félúton*, Pécs 2011, p. 12.

role in mediating the interests of the citizens. The culture of consultation with NGOs shall especially be assisted in new member states that show major weaknesses.²⁶³

Non-governmental organisations were not absolutely positive about the accession to the European Union in 2004, although the volume of grants increased greatly. A significant part of the sector found itself in a financially adverse situation, as community sources are hard to acquire by civil organisations lacking resources (due to several administrative reasons), while national grants and sources from private foundations decrease due to the role of community sources. The European Union and other international funds (Norwegian, Swiss ones) created a special market of grants, where organisations compete with each other, yet appear as potential cooperating partners. The successful applications of NGOs required adequate capital for pre-financing, and to finance their operation in cases of having to resolve discrepancies or other administrative errors.²⁶⁴ The NGOs with a stronger supporter base, human resources capacity, social base and good connections started to act in the market of grants as multinationals. They gathered the organisations operating in similar fields, and created networks. The reason for this is clearly to increase their capacity for pressure, while they also want to gather a wider source of information, increasing the action radius of their fields of interest. In the environmental sector, this clearly meant the extension of watchdog functions to the banking sector, monitoring seeds (breaching GMO-free regulations) and consumer protection.

After the accession to the EU, the greens – such as the organisations in other fields of non-governmental sectors – switched to a *project approach*. The major support received from the community cannot be spent on operation and maintenance, but mostly on a specific development or programme. This factor caused many organisations to develop projects for a call, which they could not maintain after the project period, causing them to terminate. This approach dominates in the establishment of green networks and partnership initiatives, and it has thus become a new type of “single issue”.

The creation of LMP

After the water dam case in 1997-1998, the movement retreated to local levels. Many local and university green organisations were created. The organisation of greens at the national level gained momentum during the cyanide pollution of the Tisza in 2000, having been joined

²⁶³ TEEN, 2006

²⁶⁴ Glied, V., *Civil szervezetek szerepe a környezeti ügyekben a dél-dunántúli régióban*, Budapest 2009, p. 70.

by semi-civil, semi-political organisations working along the Hungarian globalisation critic agenda, when Védegylet (*Protect the Future*) was founded. The Budapest-based organisation – although defined itself as a non-governmental organisation – soon started to operate as an ecological policy think tank and communicated policy issues. It gained popularity relatively quickly and its influence and lobbying capacity increased after László Sólyom was nominated and elected President of Hungary (during the Sólyom for President campaign) and it acted in events such as the “peace sign” demonstration to protest the Iraqi War or the NATO radar station proposed on the Zengő Mountain. Among the “old” greens of the organisation, a number of members of the new generation also appeared, under the leadership of András Schiffer, Benedek Jávor, Gábor Scheiring, Bence Tordai and others.

Apart from discussing policy issues, Védegylet also gained attention by various actions that introduced a new range of participation and protest methods in the Hungarian public life. Its activists spread leaflets, issued publications, organised conferences, or chained themselves to trees in Budapest's Roosevelt Square to protest against the cutting of trees there. These actions strengthened the internal cohesion and connections of the organisation, and connected green ideology with new left, anarchist and globcrit thinking.²⁶⁵ This variety made Védegylet interesting and accepted by many, but it also led to serious political conflicts by the mid-2000s, regarding the time and image of a newly established party. Some opposed entering the political arena, others wished for a purely ecological party, while young members suggested a leftist collective party that could synthesise value of the political left, gathering disappointed socialists, liberals, conservatives and keeping the civil base it already had. The civil green organisation network refrained from supporting a party in the mid-2000s, as it would harm its positions in the non-governmental sector. Members arguing for creating a party said it could win support from those that were tired of the bipartisan hysteria and the related political conflicts. They claimed that an increase of ecological policy conflicts will make it necessary to have a party that deals with environmental issues and can gather supporters by doing so. After internal conflicts and changes in basic values, András Lányi and his supporters left the organisation in 2005 and founded the “Élőlánc Magyarországért Mozgalom” movement that is basically conservative and orthodox in green policies.²⁶⁶

The young members, with Mr. Schiffer and his supporters spent three years with preparation and felt that the time has come to establish a party. With Lányi and his supporters, an older

²⁶⁵ Tóth, A., *LMP: kísérlet a politikai tér újraalkotására*, Budapest 2013, pp. 188-191.

²⁶⁶ Lányi, A., *Porcelán az elefántboltban – Az ökológiai politika kezdetei Magyarországon*, Budapest 2009, pp. 186-188.

core of members that urged civil cooperation and considered politics a civic activity left Védegylet. But this did not break the group, and the organisation reached major political success in 2005 by nominating László Sólyom, a professor of law with strong green values to be President of Hungary. Internal conflicts of the governing parties and luck also contributed to having Mr. Sólyom elected President of Hungary, with the support of the then opposition Fidesz party. This step basically institutionalised ecological policy issues and brought them to the political arena, although it only contributed to political capital with other environmental-social cases.

Élőlánc did compete in the 2006 elections, but could not achieve any significant success. Mr. Schiffer and his supporters concluded that a campaign based on enthusiasm without money and an apolitical attitude is not enough to convince voters about voting on a green-liberal political force. After 2006, both external and internal conditions were provided for the appearance of a new ecological-globalisation critic formation. After the demise of MSZP and the loss of confidence with SZDSZ, there was an open space in the leftist-liberal area that András Schiffer and his supporters recognised. Citizens turned away from politics in large numbers, blaming not only the governing parties, but also the entire political elite for the crisis. Védegylet thought the crisis will not only result in negative processes, but will also provide an opportunity for ecology-based solutions instead of a neoliberal (gathering) economic policy, for the change of consumption customs and persuading the politicians about a national minimum that would provide a basis for goals of multiple political terms. They also considered answers provided within traditional ideologies to be inadequate, and the ideological determination of political decisions to be obsolete, with parties of the transition period to be tired and having no confidence from the voters. They recognised a need for a third force as opposed to the technocrat/pseudo-liberal/social democrat (so-called left-wing) and populist/namely socially sensitive (so-called right-wing) parties, that would not define itself according to the left/right distinction, and that would face conflicts by providing true solutions, and globalisation critic/ecological answers on a radical democratic basis. András Schiffer and his supporters developed the basic theses of the Hungarian ecological party based on the patterns of the German green party, synthesising ecological policy suggestions of the socialist, liberal and conservative ideologies, with the inclusion of alterglob/human rights/ecologist based recommendations.

To prepare for the establishment of the party, the organisers created the Ökopolitikai Műhely Alapítvány (Ecological Policy Workshop Foundation) in the spring of 2008 to form a civil

environmentalist, human rights, anti-discrimination and liberal group. The organisation developed and corrected the future programme, structure and attitude of the party using an intranet application called Szimplakör. The party initiative was based on the ideas of participation and democracy. The intellectual background group participating in Szimplakör (Simpla Circle) concluded that Hungary needed a party based on post-modern values, democratic ideology and participatory democracy that overcomes left/right division and can undertake a new regime change with limits to wild capitalism and autocratic populism. The party based on the foundation and members of Védegylet (especially their civic professional background) was founded in 2009 under the name Politics Can Be Different. The majority of green, alterglob, human rights and other alternative NGOs, with a research group of significant influence, soon started to support the party. The party was established at a right time, as part of voters (especially from the younger generation of thirty-year-olds) showed interest in the new political organisation. LMP began campaigning for the 2009 European Parliament elections virtually without any money, fuelled by the enthusiasm of the organisers and the activists, reaching the result of 2.65%, collecting 75,000 votes. This indicated that a good campaign could allow them to be successful in the elections in 2010.²⁶⁷

After the 1980s until the early 2000s, there was no national issue in Hungary that could help a movement build its identity and serve as a mobilising force. Until the foundation of LMP, there was no party that would provide a purely ecological programme (green economy, protests against nuclear power) as it happened in West Germany or Austria. Many issues formed a part of the agenda before the formation of green parties in Western Europe (such as nuclear energy, acid rains, air pollution) that divided society – although many understood their importance – that enabled forming political capital, and helped to integrate local groups into a large national organisation after achieving political success.²⁶⁸ The popularity of LMP could benefit from a large number of environment-related issues in the second half of the 2000s, after the shock of the cyanide pollution of the Tisza. Ecological policy topics were mentioned in the news every week, and the media was curious about the movement and the party. In their first period of politics, the greens were very heavily attacked by the opponents, and many accused them of being successors of the failed liberal attempt at receiving funding from abroad and thus becoming servants of multinational corporations. Relations of the green movement, LMP and the business sector have been contradictory from the very beginning,

²⁶⁷ Tóth, A., *LMP: kísérlet a politikai tér újraalkotására*, Budapest 2013, p. 206

²⁶⁸ Gergely, Gy., *A hazai zöld civil szerveződések szerepe, lehetőségei a helyi környezeti konfliktusok megoldásában – Stratégiai perek: szűkülő mozgástér?*, Budapest 2009.

even though goodwill and reaching win-win situations was the primary guidance in establishing partnership. One or more business actors (investors, constructors, etc.) and political actors are usually affected by environmental conflicts. There are many examples that prove that a business association's ethical conduct and environmental efforts can be supported by the opinions and agreement of non-governmental organisations that may “legitimize” the activity of the company, political party or local government for the support they receive. Research literature frequently calls these “pseudo NGOs” or non-governmental organisations outside the civil sector.²⁶⁹ While many of the NGOs opposing political roles (a part of the green movement) left LMP, Fidesz used NGOs successfully to legitimise its goals and to put pressure on the government from 2002, when it started to organise the “civic circle” organisations. At the time of the elections in 2002, it called several hundred thousand supporters to the street to try to reverse the outcome of the elections, although it was unsuccessful then. After the lost elections, it successfully built a network of NGOs and advisers, but failed in 2006, partially due to the mistaken campaign and bad personal selections, and also because of the agility of the leader of the governing socialists, Ferenc Gyurcsány. The waves of protests in 2006 were advantageous for Fidesz, as it consciously constructed its tactics around the rejection of any compromise with the government, dividing the society to the extreme. It is still unclear what type of relationship existed after 2002 between far-right groups, the civic circles and Fidesz. According to Ervin Nagy, the former vice president of Jobbik, Fidesz and the far-right naturally had an informal relationship based on the distribution of work which the largest opposition party used skilfully, as it did not want to leave the democratic political stage, a thing which Jobbik and the far-right groups could do.²⁷⁰ Therefore, it is safe to say that during the riots in 2006, Fidesz and many of the related far-right, radical groups (civic circles, MIÉP, Jobbik, etc.) did not act as if they were participating in a pre-organised, professional coup d'état or “revolution”, but they seemed to be surprised by the course of events. This is probably how it happened, since an inspection has concluded that small groups of football hooligans, skinheads and other fascistoid/neo-nazi elements have entered the protests during the riots of autumn 2006, with the leadership of unknown persons. While the government and Fidesz pointed at and blamed each other for escalating the events, the speakers of the protests did not only blame Ferenc Gyurcsány and the socialists, but the whole political system, and called for the resignation of the whole

²⁶⁹ Márkus, E., *Civilek a sajtóban – közmegítélés*, Budapest 2009, p. 163.

²⁷⁰ Huth, Gergely: A Jobbik már nem az a párt, aminek látszik. 12 March 2010:

http://www.magyarhirlap.hu/belfold/a_jobbik_mar_nem_az_a_part_aminek_latszik.html

political elite. This is what Fidesz understood well, and developed a so-called civil background that would not question the government's decisions, even though they have a negative effect on them. This alliance had a somewhat religious nature, in which the personality of Viktor Orbán and the rejection of the pro-Gyurcsány/liberal elements played major roles. The leader of the opposition strengthened its own camp, pointed at the main enemy, and also collected most of the protest votes, thus reaching a two-third majority in the 2010 elections.

LMP competed at the elections as the “least bad choice” that served as an advantage in the campaign with a negative note and a lot of accusations. The 7.5% results and the 16 received seats in parliament showed that there is demand for an ecological party on the political stage (at least for a narrow base of voters). However, the eco-party seemed to have used all its resources for the successful elections, and had to face a dilemma: should it target the large space on the political left wing, or should it continue on its own? This question led to the division of LMP within three years.

New movements after 2010

The division of LMP

A new era of Hungarian politics has begun, labelled by the new government as a revolutionary transformation and a new era (“revolution in the voting booth”). It soon became clear that the 2/3 majority in the parliament is not enough to conclude rapid reforms: the economy stalled and started to decline, the national debt has reached the level before the democratic transition, emigration was gaining momentum, the foreign currency interest rates of loans rose dramatically and caused tens of thousands of families to find themselves in a hopeless situation. The systematic reforms affected personal livelihood, economic satellites and intellectual groups, and turned social groups, professions and generations against each other, causing further tensions between Hungary and the European Union.

LMP tried to solve this dilemma by ignoring the required discussions. Many of its supporters considered MSZP a party with a neoliberal economic agenda that sometimes performed social policy programmes to remain in power. A large share of its members was not willing to enter a political compromise aimed to create a united left-wing opposition. They tried to manoeuvre and keep an equal distance from the left and the right as well, and aimed to take sides with the people as a constructive opposition force. They initiated a referendum campaign in the spring

of 2011, but due to disinterest from the public (and the National Election Committee's failure to allow some of the more important referendum questions) they could not collect the required number of signatures. The party prepared to communicate in policy matters, thus showing an example to the other parties. It quickly turned out that this type of politics cannot be successful. Fidesz started reforms in all social systems and began to restructure the country completely. The flat tax rate on income tax showed that the new government was favouring the richer middle classes. Cutting the funding of education and social services and simultaneously increasing the volume of budget spent on the unsuccessful Hungarian football, retroactive legislation, amending the constitution, the destruction of checks and balances, total takeover of the state media, reform of the election system, controlling of the arts and cinema sectors angered many. And not just these phenomena angered the people, but also the arrogant, surreal, cynical and sniffy communication of the government and its politicians, things that were far beyond the acceptable levels for many. LMP clearly thought that the election campaign was suitable to mobilise the masses, while it turned out that the party could only rely on a couple of hundred activists. Nevertheless, the Civil Unity Forum supporting Fidesz could mobilise several hundred thousand supporters for its "Peace March for Hungary" rally on 23 October 2012. It was also proved that although the newly popular movements and informal groups – such as Szolidaritás and Milla – could move masses of citizens, they had no political routine. LMP could not break through the wall of ignorance, and could not get rid of its intellectual style that may seem alien or "too professional" for many voters. It is also clear that a party may grow out of a movement, but it cannot expropriate the movement, as the two can only be effective simultaneously, such as in case of the German greens. While they thought that the citizens had had enough of divisive political clashes and a new, cooperative political culture may emerge for the common goals of the nation, the exactly opposite thing happened: the period after the crisis and the 2/3 majority of Fidesz increased hysteria in politics, poverty and social inequalities increased. LMP made same mistake as SZDSZ in 1990 and 1994, by having no single (charismatic) leader that the party could be identified with.

During the autumn of 2011, LMP initiated talks with opposition groups about a possible cooperation, but these terminated when the new formation of Gordon Bajnai, an ex-socialist prime minister announced his new initiative during late 2012. Szolidaritás proposed the creation of a great opposition round table, but LMP still did not want to join MSZP and the new party of Ferenc Gyurcsány, Demokratikus Koalíció (*Democratic Coalition – DK*). The

calls from the left divided the unity of the party, which could not be repaired by the “New Resistance” campaign in December 2012. On 23 December 2012, LMP’s members of parliament protesting against an amendment of the national assembly’s internal regulations chained themselves to the parking place of the Parliament building, and they were only removed after an intervention from the police. The desperate action increased party support temporarily, but then it kept stagnating around 2-3%. Part of the parliamentary faction thought that this meant that only a unified left will be able to defeat Fidesz in 2014. The new election act further supported this notion, as the elections are going to be held in a one-round system, making the opposition votes divided against the government candidate if no coalition is formed.

During the autumn of 2012, after failed talks with trade unions, LMP found itself on its own. Szolidaritás and Milla announced to have entered into talks with Gordon Bajnai, thus closing another door for the ecological party. The new political force was established as Együtt 2014 (*Together 2014*) on 26 October 2012. This step divided LMP for good. The only remaining question was whether the members considered defeating the Orbán-government or the independence of the party to be more important. The green party rejected cooperation with Együtt 2014 at its congress held in November 2012, then, the group led by Benedek Jávor announced to quit the parliamentary faction and LMP as well. Those who left founded a new party under the name Párbeszéd Magyarországért (*Dialogue for Hungary – PM*) and joined the Bajnai-initiative. The negotiations with MSZP during the summer of 2013 and the alliance agreement of the socialists with Együtt 2014 basically proved LMP right, as the leftist-liberal camp was unified again, with support from a green-globcrit group, Szolidaritás and Milla. The social democratic party was invited to joint Együtt 2013, and Ferenc Gyurcsány’s DK also applied for membership (although this is not concluded before the deadline of this paper).

Before the 2014 national elections LMP had been expected to fight on its own, and it was doubtful if the voters are convinced that it is able to act as an individual force in the national assembly. However, reaching the 5% limit to enter parliament also seemed impossible in 2009, the green party could make it. In 2014 LMP was able to mobilise just its own voters and tired of the conflicts of the left and the right but just in a very small measure. At last the party achieved the 5% threshold, but it was just enough to send 5 representatives to the Hungarian Parliament, due to the new electoral process which was implemented in that year.

Szolidaritás, Milla, 4K, HaHa

Changes in 2012 created new, previously unknown movements and groups, which could rapidly bring masses on the streets and then be transformed into parties (or diminish entirely). The movements are based on several single issues, and the buzzwords of the protests they organised are mixed with multiple levels of grievances and demands. These initiatives were created and fuelled by the divisive politics of Fidesz. At first, the communication of the government considered the employees of law enforcement agencies, media professionals, disability pensioners, students, artists-scapegoats who disagreed with the government's reforms.²⁷¹

Magyar Szolidaritás Mozgalom (*Hungarian Solidarity Movement*) was created for a single reason, to protect the privileged pension schemes of law enforcement employees. This led to the creation of a general group of trade union leaders, organised according to the Polish example, to provide an initial impetus for anti-government protests. Shortly, several organisations protesting against the nationalisation of private pension funds and the punishment of homeless people joined. Szolidaritás has deeper roots than the other movements, as its dynamic is provided by people coming from a classic civil background that raised their voice for goals such as restoring legality, progressive tax systems and social security. The consistent agreement of the two leaders, the soldier Péter Kónya and fireman Kornél Árok was unquestionable, serious political challenges only affected the movement in early 2012. Regarding their ideological framework, all movements voiced their aim of overcoming the fighting and ideological war dividing the country, which would only be possible by strengthening social activity and participation. The fight against political passivity, the fear of the leaders being blackmailed by their livelihoods and the fear of freezing due to failure helped the movement overcome its apolitical attitude and guided it toward party politics.

²⁷¹ Vári, Gy., *A Szolidaritás útja*, Budapest 2013, p. 242.



Clown Revolution in 2011, organised by the Hungarian Solidarity Movement

Souce: www.nol.hu

Kónya, Árok and their supporters organised their protest titled “Clown Revolution” on 16 June 2011 to Alkotmány Street in Budapest, protesting against the government's decision to retroactively raise the retirement age for law enforcement employees and introducing other regulations affecting employee rights. The organisers dressed as clowns intended to parody the government's favourite term of “revolution in the voting booth”. After the initial success, Szolidaritás and several hundred joining organisations announced organising the “D-Day” demonstrations on 29 September. The protest of 50-60 thousand participants was planned to take three days, started at the Kossuth Square of Budapest and ended with a sitdown strike in Clark Ádám Square via the Chain Bridge. A few hundred participants also went to the Sándor Palace, the seat of the President of Hungary. The group Egymillióan a Demokráciáért (One Million for Democracy) left Milla and joined the trade unions. Milla did not want to participate in the events of Szolidaritás, partially because it considered the activity of the trade union group a competitor, and it thought that Szolidaritás and law enforcement trade union organisations had connections to political parties, particularly MSZP and Jobbik. From autumn 2011 to 23 October 2012, Szolidaritás and Milla implicitly shared the organisations of street demonstrations, and also held a joint opposition protest on 2 January 2012 and opposed the ceremonial entry into force of the new Constitution.

After the events of autumn 2011, leaders of Szolidaritás quit (or were expelled) from the trade unions on which the organisation was based. Szolidaritás intended to make up for the loss of its organised institutional background by joining the NGOs, but it turned out to be a

complicated issue. The group committed the same mistakes as many other movements: it failed to maintain the enthusiasm and commitment to a common goal among its members, lacking definite political successes. The government proposed compromise solutions, but usually swept away the demands of Szolidaritás equipped with its 2/3 majority. Kornél Árok leaked his plans to establish his own party in early 2012, but his fellow leaders rejected the idea and believed in forming an opposition round table. While the movement worked to establish its organisational background, the original organisation practically dissolved. Árok considered the civil efforts to be futile, if there was no party in the background that could compete at the elections. The apolitical, uncompromising stance of Szolidaritás provided the movement with symbolic credit which has partially diminished after the dissolution. The movement could not elaborate upon its the important identity, and failed to show a third way of cooperation between the NGOs and the democratic opposition for the common good of the nation. On top of that, anti-establishment and anti-corruption buzzwords and problems of poverty were more successfully communicated by Jobbik. The success and subsequent “emptiness” of Szolidaritás is a good example of how effectively Fidesz could remove the checks and balances aimed to restrict the power of the government, and change important systems without any real opposition. The “stop-and-go” political games permanently applied by the government made it impossible for opposing organisations to adapt to the ever-changing central communication, and to increase or maintain the resistance of their members, which ultimately led to fatigue.

This is why it was a little surprising, but practically rational that the organisation of Mr. Bajnai and the “truncated” Szolidaritás decided to join forces. To Mr. Kónya and other leaders of the movement, Mr. Bajnai was an acceptable figure of the left, and considered him a professional, not a reformer of the new left. The movement joined forces with the Bajnai-organisation on 23 October 2012, and created the party named Együtt 2014, with the accession of Milla as well.

One Million for Press Freedom (Milla)

Milla was the first movement that began to organise against the measures and reform plans of the Fidesz government. Milla was originally founded as a Facebook Group named One Million for Hungarian Press Freedom, on 21 December 2010, the day after the first protest for the freedom of the press. The group created by civil activist Péter Juhász rapidly gained

supporters. Its members began their operation by showing how Fidesz started governing without a programme, with spontaneous ideas and provisions, and that the “National Cooperation System” created by the government was only a fake negotiation body that did not induce true discussions and expected reactions to centrally invented questions. On top of that, they were angered by the sense of absurdity, the success propaganda of the government and the enormous discrepancy of reality and government communications.²⁷²

During the first half of 2011, Hungary held the Presidency of the Council of the European Union for the first time, while the government and the prime minister kept talking about a freedom fight, explaining that Hungary will not allow the EU to interfere with internal politics. While the 2/3 majority started to transform the political system, the opposition contemplated the changes as a lame duck, being unable to actively influence the processes. MSZP was healing its wounds, LMP could not overcome having put on a course by the two major parties and organise an independent political pole. Jobbik acted as constructive opposition, dealing with taboo subjects defining the essence of politics. In this situation the non-governmental sector became more active and protested against the amendment of the media law, claiming that it threatened balanced and politics-free information services in the country.

On 14 January 2011 the series of protests arrived to the Kossuth Square in Budapest, protests against limitations of press freedom. This was the first on-line organised demonstration in Hungarian history. A general concept package was elaborated for the national holiday on 15 March, which included the issue of the increasing emigration, the dangers of narrowing the rights of democratic institutions, an increase of social differences and the invasion of social subsystems by politics. Many intellectuals and artists supported the protests, providing faces to the demands of Milla: dialogue, democracy, and an end to political infighting and fear. The rap song “I don't like the system” was composed in autumn 2011 and rapidly spread on the Internet and provided the tone of the protests. This song represented a new generation complaint of several dozen thousand young people having a university degree, without a goal, sensing poverty, hopelessness and dissolution of democracy around themselves. Milla also had to ask “where to go” for itself, just as Szolidaritás did. The initial buzzword of the Milla-organisers was: no politics please! Nevertheless, when they found themselves in the centre of protests and increasingly had to deal with politics, they felt that the major civil potential

²⁷² Petőcz, Gy., *Milla: örkutya, vagy vadászkutya?*, Budapest 2013, pp. 268-269.

should be converted to votes in the election. This was a major issue in the history of Milla, as it was the only democratic proto-political force in the field between the left and the centre.

After the protests of 15 March – which were joined by 40 thousand participants – they had to consider stepping forward toward creating a political group. Those not supporting this direction either left the movement, or went on to work in Milla's NGO wing. They established their own media channel, and gathered interests with gags and street protests. This division basically meant that the movement had to develop and represent two different programmes. One aimed to defeat Fidesz, in cooperation with the opposition, both inside and outside the parliament, and another aimed to change the entire political system.²⁷³ Milla is a third-generation creation of new social movements, it was organised on the internet, conducting most of its discussions in the virtual space and identifying with pro-Europe, liberal, green and new left values. They reject populism, institutions established according to partisan logics, and all forms of corruption. Meetings of the activists concluded that the Third Republic founded in 1990 fell in such a great crisis that it cannot be overcome. The only solution could be to create a new pole and announce the idea of the Fourth Republic. Milla has not only been a movement, but also a framework, providing a platform to people and groups accepting a democratic minimum. The movement was created for a single issue (the amendment of the media law) and later went on to enforce some kind of a watchdog function that draws attention to anomalies in the Hungarian political system, the forced paths of economy and politics and discrepancies in understanding democracy, emphasising civil and opposition roles and the lack of political culture. The Fourth Republic (Negyedik Köztársaság – 4K) imagined grassroots reforms in a narrow, civil space, free from politics. It is clear that the power induced in civil roots and supported by discontent could not be turned to profit by Szolidaritás or Milla in public politics, for the facts listed herein.

Fourth Republic (4K) and the Student's Network (HaHa)

4K entered the political arena as a generation-based civil force, a group of young digital consumers. The organisation appeared with community street games and flash mobs in the autumn of 2010, it was active in the cooperation with students and those protesting against the new constitution, decided to transform into a party in 2011, and held its first congress in 2012. It mainly expected the membership of those tired of political fights, pointless debates and

²⁷³ Ibid., p. 281.

anger. They demanded real political participation, real democracy and the reconquest of public life. They intend to act against a bleak future for the youth, by directing attention to uncertainties and the problem of emigration. 4K believes that the crisis is the consequence of a global process, and the result of the rule of banks and political background deals not approved by the public. This includes the activity of Gyurcsány and the Orbán governments, which only provides answers on a forced path, which are merely reactions to the problems arising. They also understand – what LMP, Szolidaritás, Milla and other organisations failed to – that the love of freedom and enthusiasm in Eastern Europe and Hungary usually manifests in resistance and protests, not in the hope of unity and reaching common goals. In this environment, the sense of community is provided by acting against something or somebody, and dissension is the base of joint living, with paternalism and trust in the government is still defining most of the concepts of individual responsibility. However, politicians and the state are not able to solve certain problems, and it requires the choices of individual to get things right, if that is possible at all. There is no tradition of a collective formation of will in Hungary, it is mostly the individual enforcement strategies that prevail, in which the community is only a tool, while wealth and power are the goals.²⁷⁴ This leads to the conclusion that participation in public affairs is useless, the feeling and belief of the individual that *“I cannot change anything”* and *“someone else can try to change things, I am not willing to risk anything”* are going to define the thinking of the average citizen, with apathy and indifference becoming the prevailing view. This is what 4K intends to change, and as a self-defined leftist patriot party it wishes to emphasise the importance of participation, demanding a tax reform, the restoration of economic and legal stability, and the strengthening of workers' rights. The major challenges for the 4K in the future are going to be the establishment of a real organisational structure and the mobilisation of its potential voters.

The history of the alternative university representation organisation, HaHa started much earlier than 2011. The organisers already appeared among the Occupy movement and the Anonymus group in the mid-2000s. In the 2011 they had several actions, occupying the office of Máté Kocsis, mayor of Budapest's 8th district, protesting in front of the Bankcenter office building and raising awareness with other similar media hack events. The group initially consisted of 20-30 members and pronounced clear messages: as accomplices, the individual consumers, the corporations, the bankers and the politicians are all responsible for the situation. The university and high school protests were fuelled in autumn 2011, when the

²⁷⁴ Mikecz, D., *Köztér és köztársaság: 4K.*, Budapest 2013, p. 365.

government announced plans to reform higher education, introducing an obligatory student agreement, a radical decrease of state-financed university seats and great reductions in the education budget. HaHa also profited from the notion that the National Conference of Students' Represents' Councils (HÖÖK) was not appropriately representing the students' interests. HaHa chose a variety of methods for its protests. Its activists disrupted speeches of the state secretary responsible for the reform of higher education (who used to be an active member of the communist party before the transition to democracy) and other ministry officials, they organised marches, student forums, talked at demonstrations organised by Milla, occupied university halls and auditoriums and held night vigils. They played a major role in the resignation of President Pál Schmitt, continuously organising campaigns, especially on the internet.²⁷⁵



March of the students, December, 2012

Source: eduline.hu

The organisation gained popularity during the winter of 2012/2013, when discontent reached a new peak. On 12 December 2012, a group of students entered the Kossuth Square of Budapest with a march of several thousand protesters and reached the steps of the Parliament building, only to meet a wall of policemen. On 11 February 2013, HaHa and high school activists held a demonstration in Budapest's Deák Square, marched to the Faculty of

²⁷⁵ Gerő, M., *El kéne foglalni valamit... Az Occupy Wall Street és a hallgatói mozgalom*, Budapest 2013, pp. 322-323.

Humanities building of the Eötvös Loránd University and “occupied” the main building. The “first Hungarian ‘occupy a university’ event” ended in 45 days, after the participants concluded an agreement with the leaders of the university. According to the agreement, the students were free to organise forums in the previously occupied auditorium and the university declared to “support self-organisation of the students”. Moreover, the organisers negotiated with the government, which again took a “stop and go” stance. While the students always compared the dismantling of higher education with the billions spent on building stadiums and spent on football, members of the far-right/neo-fascist football hooligan movement Ultras Liberi demonstrated at the student protests. After the initial protests, the government changed its original education policy reforms in many aspects. It revoked its proposal on quotas of admitted students, and provided almost 55,000 seats instead of the proposed 10,500 in higher education institutions. In February they divided the ministry unit responsible for education into a state secretariat for elementary and secondary education and another one for higher education. The controversial state secretary Rózsa Hoffman remained head of the elementary and secondary education unit, while the István Klinghammer was appointed state secretary for higher education. The stand-off was thus resolved, although no agreement was reached, and issues affecting the Hungarian youth were postponed and ignored.

Politics against politics

Hungarian Two-tailed Dog Party (MKKP)

Magyar Kétfarkú Kutya Párt (Hungarian Two-tailed Dog Party) started as a joke in the city of Szeged in 2006. A group of friends had initially intended to use street campaigns, thought-provoking, cynical, symbolic messages to draw attention to anomalies of consumer society, the poor quality of the media and the flood of promises from politics and politicians. The formation, which was not registered as a party, was soon joined by a team of young creatives that started to operate in Budapest and major cities (university towns). Their declared aim was to make citizens think and to annoy politicians. They articulated intentionally impossible promises to voters, such as infinite life, free beer and a tax cut of 100%. They announced that these promises were no more impossible to keep than those promised by politicians.

The formation appeared in public in 2009, a year before the elections, when it organised a protest at the building of the National Statistics Bureau. The 200-300 participants clearly

stated to be tired of political fights, hysteria in the political arena and an unnecessary and hypocritical overuse of the patriotic themes. Leaders of the initiative announced that no election programme was necessary, as the other parties did not have plausible programmes either, or in case they did, those were completely unreal and intended to be forgotten after the elections. It is interesting to note that many impossible demands of MKKP turned into reality after 2010. Official government communication entities and other government bodies committed errors that could have been announced in the programme of MKKP, or published on its fake news website started after 2010, Hírcsárda. The joke party closely cooperates with the átlátszó.blog.hu portal that is a watchdog monitoring state investments, the effects of political decisions and the consequences thereof. The fact-finding and investigative series of articles on the blog try to disentangle and systematise operations of economic background organisations of the political elite.

In 2013, MKKP initiated official proceedings to become an officially registered party and requested the court for registration, also announcing that it was planning to run in the 2014 parliamentary elections. The intention to participate in politics did not change the image of the group, in a 2012 project they made promises to develop their performance in major Hungarian cities. They promised to build a mountain and a spaceport in Szeged; a gigantic church in Debrecen; a triple-size extension of the abandoned high tower building in Pécs; a sandy beach plaza, Mediterranean suburbs and a giant amusement park in Budapest. They also promised to construct an underground railway connecting the eastern and western borders of the country, and a stadium covering the total area of the country, thus reacting to the government's multi-billion stadium reconstruction programme. On 27 April 2013, activists of the joke party joined by the 4K protested on the streets against the serious harms against the political class and the billionaire oligarchs assisting them. They wanted to draw attention to the recent activities of the government providing major development orders to companies and corporate empires without a proper tender, and the government labelling the opposition politicians or NGOs requesting data as supporters of multinational corporations and local representatives of foreign capitalists. Although the protest was ironic and cynical in its tone, it fitted into the series of movement organisations started in the year before, which named the oligarchs, corrupt corporate networks, banks, credit institution and offshore companies to be responsible for the crisis, not to mention the representatives of the political elite. They also started a “populist calculator” to convert the costs of corrupt and useless investments into the expenses spent on medicine and basic food.

MKKP – which is similar to the Icelandic Best Party in many ways – intends to take advantage of an increasingly anti-political sentiment and plans to compete in the parliamentary elections in 2014. Since the elections are only open to officially registered parties, this plan may fail due to administrative reasons, as the court rejects to register the joke party due to its deceptive name.

It did, however, register the Hungarian Kalózpárt (Pirate Party), founded in April 2012 following Swedish and German examples. The group originally operating within LMP left the green party in 2011 and continued politics independently. Pirate parties all over the world are parties that include the freedom of online file exchange, the promotion of civil rights, direct participation, liquid democracy, a reform of copyright, a free flow of knowledge, freedom of information, more secure data safety, the protection of the private sphere, greater transparency in government and the public sphere, democratic education and similar issues in their programmes. The Hungarian party fights for similar goals, promoting the decision-making system established between representative democracy and participatory democracy, the so-called liquid democracy; and a basic income guarantee that would provide every citizen with a monthly income to provide a minimum level of livelihood.

Conclusion

Crisis had already arrived in Hungary in 2006, before the global crisis. It has not only been a financial-economic, but also a moral and ethical crisis which affected the governing coalition first, and then spread across society as a kind of judgement on the entire political system. Protests and street riots indicated that the majority of citizens had become tired of promises and party clashes in the political arena. The largest opposition force, Fidesz understood the public mood and continuously attacked the government and its discredited prime minister, Ferenc Gyurcsány. This resulted in Fidesz winning a 2/3 majority in the 2010 elections. It began to transform the country completely. The crisis caused two formations to emerge. They entered the national assembly as new parties, and had strong movement networks in their background. Although it faced several scandals, Jobbik could remain united, while LMP dissolved and the quitting leftist, globcrit group joined Gordon Bajnai's Együtt 2014 formation, under the name PM.

Protests against the reforms of Fidesz began as early as the first autumn after the elections. The originally single-issue movements grew to become groups and parties acting against the

government and the entire political system by 2012. In the organisation of street protests, Szolidaritás and Milla emerged, while the opposition parties were shocked to see what was going on around them. The government continued to act without a compromise and repelled discontent forces according to the “divide and rule” principle. Therefore, democratic movements had to face the dilemma that most of the non-governmental organisations face when entering the political arena: without actual success the enthusiasm of the members vanishes, the movement freezes and diminishes. Their initially radical anti-politics attitude was misunderstood: Szolidaritás and Milla joined the Együtt 2014 organisation, the 4K is currently in talks with LMP, while MKKP and Kalózpárt also informally belong to the circle of the green party. Having no current single issues, HaHa and other student organisations are silent in policy issues. The bipolar character of politics in Hungary till 2010 extended by several additional poles by 2013. The governing party forms an enormous block in the centre and on the right, while Jobbik and the neo-nazi/arrow cross and national radical groups occupy the far-right. The democratic opposition is fragmented, continuously changing and consists of a mass of ideologically divided left/new left/globcrit/green/liberal movements and parties.

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Halfway or No Way?²⁷⁶

Abstract

I am going to sketch a general picture of Hungary today. This will require to present in some detail the road on which we have arrived here: the peculiarities of the Kádár-regime, i.e. the “goulash-communism” and of the Hungarian “refolution” (self-contradictory mixture of revolution and reform) i.e. the constitutional revolution of 1989; the features and failure of the liberal enterprise. I will describe the present situation in Hungary as a halfway in the learning process of a democratic political culture that already owes a lot to its established traditions: the state-centrism, paternalistic leadership, occasional outbursts of nationalism. Methodologically this essay is a mid-level theorizing: neither Big Theory, nor historical account; neither philosophy, nor sociology. We will follow Alexis de Tocqueville's guidance (signalled mainly in the footnotes) to explain what happens under one's very eyes. Is an attempt at defining a special feature of Hungarian political culture: “kádárisz”.

„Qui cherche dans la liberté autre chose qu'elle-même est fait pour servir”

(L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution, livre III, chap. 3.)

He who seeks in freedom anything else than freedom itself is fit to become a slave.

Alexis de Tocqueville²⁷⁷

²⁷⁶ This chapter appeared in Politeja 28, 2014 Journal of the Faculty of International and Political Studies of the Jagiellonian University in Kraków

²⁷⁷ *The Old Regime and the Revolution*, p.204.

Introduction

By now it seems quite obvious that something is going on in Hungary and we are not entitled to dismiss this “something” as merely “democracy’s business as usual”. Either the friends or foes of Hungary’s actual government, the government notwithstanding, agree that we may speak about a kind of revolution. Viktor Orbán, prime minister of Hungary, in several public appearances talks about the “unfinished revolution”, “failed revolution” of 1989, or he defines emphatically the 2010 elections as a “revolution in the voting booths”. On the other hand the very recent, so-called *Tavares-report*²⁷⁸ speaks about the “dismantling of the Rechtsstaat” or even more recently, Adam Michnik about a “gradual coup”²⁷⁹ – all that seems to be a counterrevolution. Bear in mind that every revolution entails a counterrevolution, and without it is not complete.²⁸⁰

To be able to discuss the *context* within which Hungarian politics unfolds today we will investigate one (and only one) of the constituting elements of the Hungarian political culture: “kádárism” and try to be as consistent as possible to present what follows from it in regard to the process of transition from communism to democracy and policymaking in the new regime.

If we all, fathers, mothers, children and even grandchildren, are the bastards of communism – as Adam Michnik puts it - it is by no means a wonder why our regime is a bastard of the communist system - “despised by the enlightened classes, hostile to liberty, governed by intriguers, adventurers,

²⁷⁸ 2012/2130(INI) – 2013.05.02: *Draft Report on the Situation of Fundamental Rights: Standards and Practices in Hungary*. Preparatory document: *Working Document 4: On the Situation of Fundamental Rights: Standards and Practices in Hungary* (pursuant to the EP resolution of 16 February 2012) - *The Principles of Democracy and the Rule of Law* (2013.03.05) at <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/libe/draft-reports.html?linkedDocument=true&ufolderComCode=LIBE&ufolderLegId=7&ufolderId=09747&urefProcYear=&urefProcNum=&urefProcCode=#menuzone>, 6 June, 2013.

²⁷⁹ Polish former dissident Adam Michnik: “We Are Bastards of Communism” at <http://www.spiegel.de/international/europe/polish-dissident-adam-michnik-on-eastern-europe-after-communism-a-913912.html>, 3 August, 2013.)

²⁸⁰ Alexis de Tocqueville speaks in his memoirs about the social revolution of 1848 and the bonapartist counterrevolution – the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte – as being parts of the same process within which the claims for social security, order and state interference with all the affairs of people call forth the destruction of liberty. Being very well aware that history never repeats itself, I might recall – again with Tocqueville: “On voit que l’histoire est une galerie de tableaux où il y a peu d’originaux et beaucoup de copies” Tocqueville, *L’ancien Régime Et La Révolution*, 1967. – that in the gallery of history are very many reproductions and just a few new pictures: the resemblance between bonapartism and the NCS (see last part of this paper) is striking.

and valets.”²⁸¹ But we will have no clearer picture of what goes on in Hungary until we investigate several other sources of the Hungarian political culture as well: authoritarianism and nationalism and social structure. But this paper has to have its limits; we won’t be able to accomplish all that, except some scattered remarks when analyzing the present “state of affairs”. My analysis is a political one and I won’t engage in discussing in detail the economy, economic development – this is indeed a serious self-limitation.

However, the aim of this paper is to give an insight into the Hungarian political culture. The “cultural turn” approach came about in political science some 20 years ago²⁸², when professionals and commentators alike were unable to explain the differences of the revolutions of 1989 and more importantly, the differences in the prospects of the newly established democracies. Shall we look in the pre-revolutionary period to find the answers?²⁸³ Clearly, this is an insight that would go back to

²⁸¹ „Louis Napoleon alone was ready to take the place of the Republic, because he already held the power in his hands. But what could come of his success, except a bastard Monarchy, despised by the enlightened classes, hostile to liberty, governed by intriguers, adventurers, and valets?” Tocqueville, *The Recollections of Alexis De Tocqueville*, 1896. p.283.

²⁸² In international scholarship, political culture studies – we may say – always were of a concern for authors. The modern history of the concept started with G. Almond, “Comparative Political Systems”, *Journal of Politics* 18, (1953). Of course, the most influential work is Almond and Verba, *The Civic Culture*, Princeton, N.J., 1963. and under the form of „social capital” Putnam, Leonardi, and Nanetti, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton, N.J., 1993. and R. Putnam, “Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital”, *Journal of Democracy* 6, no. 1 (1995). Although Putnam denies that he ever thought of political culture, the works inspired by his analysis make frequent reference to it. Several attempts were made to adopt, criticize, expand, restrict, and recast the original concept. An overview and a new operational proposal is to be found in: R. Lane, “Political Culture: Residual Category or General Theory”, *Comparative Political Studies* 25, (1992). A systematic categorization is found in: Mishler and Pollack, “On Culture Thick and Thin: Toward a Neo-Cultural Synthesis”, in *Political Culture in Post-Communist Europe*, ed. Detlef Pollack and Jorg Jacobs, Ashgate, 2003., which take into account post-communist experiences as well. These experiences are dealt with in many other studies. A summary of these is to be found in J. Kubik, “Cultural Approaches”, in *The Handbook of Transformation Research*, ed. Raj Kollmorgen, Wolfgang Merkel, and Hans-Jürgen Wagoner, VS-Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2012. The most comprehensive inventory of theories and approaches for students is Pickel and Pickel, *Politische Kultur- Und Demokratieforschung - Grundbegriffe, Theorien, Methoden. Eine Einführung*, Wiesbaden, 2006.

²⁸³ It is very instructive to re-read now Gabriel Almond’s once-famous article: G. Almond, “Communism and Political Culture Theory”, *Comparative Politics* 15, no. 2 (1983). With his own theory in mind, without a thorough knowledge of how the Soviet system operates, with barely any survey support or of evidence gathered in the field it is by no means a wonder that Almond failed to assess the correct relationship of political culture and communism, and this is true especially for Hungary. However, there is a sentence in this article that might help in a post-factum analysis. „What the scholarship of comparative communism has been telling us is that political cultures are not easily transformed. A sophisticated political movement ready to manipulate, penetrate, organize, indoctrinate, and coerce, given an opportunity to do so for a generation or longer ends up as much or more **transformed than transforming**.” (p.137 – Emphasis added) If this is true, then we are guided to investigate even further in time and social structure; it is possible that the „kádárism” is an expression of a much more deeply rooted political culture and not so much a „special Hungarian way” of communism („goulash communism” as it was called). On the other hand, a dynamic concept of political culture is needed, because it seems also true that Hungarian-style communism has shaped political culture with lasting effects.

By now there is a growing amount of literature that deals with communist legacy as influencing, determining in various ways and degrees the prospects of post-communist democratization. Some (more successful) examples include: R. Rose, *Understanding Post-Communist Transformation: A Bottom up Approach*, London; New York, 2009. Mishler and Rose, “Trust, Distrust and Skepticism: Popular Evaluations of Civil and Political Institutions in Post-Communist Societies”, *The Journal of Politics* 59, no. 2 (1997). R. Rohrschneider, *Learning Democracy: Democratic and Economic Values in Unified Germany*, Oxford [England]; New York,

Alexis de Tocqueville's *The Old Regime and the Revolution*. It would be undeniable that this paper owes a lot to the spirit of Tocqueville's *oeuvre*²⁸⁴.

The failure of the regime or system change²⁸⁵?

Ultimate failure: this is the overall consensus on the regime change in 1989. Gáspár Miklós Tamás the anarchist, left-wing theoretician, the extreme right, quasi-fascist *Jobbik* party, the greens, and Viktor Orbán, prime minister of Hungary share the same belief, which is based upon a wide-ranging popular feeling. The only exception is the socialist-liberal elite, but even they remain silent confronting the consensus, because they have to take upon themselves the guilt that probably is not theirs: being in power for 12 years out of the 23 years since the regime change, they are considered to be responsible for that failure.

The essence of the consensus is very simple. The regime-change created a world where things fare badly; or created a bad world, that from the moral, political, economic point of view is disaster itself, Hell on Earth.

Moving against the flow, we have to carefully analyze the results of the first decade of the new, democratic regime, and then ask again, why the disappointment has risen with such a force?²⁸⁶

1999. Pop-Eleches and Tucker, "Communism's Shadow: Postcommunist Legacies, Values, and Behavior", *Comparative Politics* 43, no. 4 (2011). Pollack et al., *Political Culture in Post-Communist Europe: Attitudes in New Democracies*, England, 2003.

²⁸⁴ When debating the „social capital” notion and research, Foley and Edwards [Foley and Edwards, "Escape from Politics? Social Theory and the Social Capital Debate", *American Behavioral Scientist* 40, no. 5 (March/April) (1997).] basically distinguish between the rational choice-based school [see J. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory*, Cambridge, Mass., 1994.] and neo-Tocquevillians. They analyze the *Democracy in America* and Tocqueville's picture of the American associational life, but I take inspiration from the whole Tocquevillian approach to politics in designing a broader concept of political culture. The “cultural turn” in political science means also a “sociological turn” in culturalist approaches, an attempt to define notions, find variables, research significant correlations... My references to Tocqueville result in a far less operational – systematic and scientific one may say – inquiry and will be more theoretical-descriptive in nature.

²⁸⁵ I make a distinction between „regime” and „system”. Regime is defined as a primarily political notion, as „ruling”. If one party rules, within undemocratic or seemingly democratic circumstances (some elections, however fake, are held), then we may speak about a regime: like fascist, nazi, communist regime; or democracy, when the „people rule”. The „system” refers to governance: a set of interrelated policies which would be recognizable by one common ground they constitute: market economy or state-centered policies; „statism” may refer to a system of governance that can operate within democratic or autocratic regimes.

²⁸⁶ In 2003 András Bozóki could describe the East Central European transitions as „success stories” [A. Bozóki, "Success Stories: Lessons of Democratization in Central Europe", *Regio: Minorities, Politics, Society – English Edition*, (2003).] Nonetheless, Bozóki's systematic and comparative account is worth consulting. (Downloadable version: <http://epa.oszk.hu/00400/00476/00003/pdf/01.pdf>). Christian Haerpfer, in a classical collection of studies on East European political culture, writes in the same vein: “Over 15 years after the events of 1989, the

(From the point of view of a political analysis, we are confronted with an intriguing methodological question: something that is considered a *fact* by a citizen could be considered a *non-fact* from a theoretical point of view?)

The Liberal Revolution

At the beginning of the 90's, Stephen Holmes, reflecting on the "end of history" and the liberal revolution as the last stage of history thesis of Francis Fukuyama, wrote: "Throughout the post-Communist world . . . we are observing waves of radical change that look so far like a liberal revolution." "Is liberal revolution," he asked rhetorically, "not the most significant fact of contemporary political life?"²⁸⁷ But the heralds of a new – liberal democratic – era in the history of East Central Europe were many, so no complete listing is possible (an overview is given by Jeffrey Isaac²⁸⁸). Beneath this somewhat eschatological surface, questions and doubts were lurking. These were expressed most strikingly by a headline in the New York Times that predicted that East Central Europeans are likely to discover the "The Tunnel at the End of the Light"²⁸⁹.

What went wrong with these high hopes? What do the scholars and what does the public expect from "liberal democracy"?

For theoreticians it was doubtless clear that "liberal democracy" means constitutionalism and the Rule of Law (Rechtsstaat) as components of liberalism, while democracy means a democratic political *system* with its institutions and, above all, free elections. According to this recipe formulated by most of the thinkers, an effervescent period of constitution- and institution-building began in 1990.

If we consider the written, one-single-document constitution, seemingly, Hungary lagged far behind: there was no new constitution adopted until 2012. Bruce Ackerman's advice to East Central European countries to use "the window of opportunity" to frame a brand new constitution that will

democratic transformation of the Hungarian political system is almost complete." (Ch. Haerpfer, "Hungary - Structure and Dynamics of Democratic Consolidation", in *Democracy and Political Culture in Eastern Europe*, ed. Hans-Dieter Klingeman and Dieter Fuchs, 2006, p.148.) It looks like a democracy, it talks like a democracy – is it not a democracy? (See footnote no.317. It is indeed hard to find the proper concepts, theoretical tools to evaluate a democratic performance.)

²⁸⁷ S. Holmes, "The Scowl of Minerva", *The New Republic*, no. March 23 (1992): 27, 33.

²⁸⁸ J. Isaac, "The Meanings of 1989", *Social Research* 63, no. 2 (1996).)

²⁸⁹ Regarding the prospects and achievements of privatization in East Central Europe, Stephen Cohen uses the same metaphor [S. Cohen, "Privatization in Eastern Europe: The Tunnel at the End of the Light", *The American Prospect*, no. December 19 (2001).]

respond to the desires of those billions detaching themselves from communism, in Hungary was not accomplished²⁹⁰.

On the other hand, the (“communist”) constitution being in effect from 1949 until 1989, was first largely revised in 1989 by the last communist parliament, allowing the multi-party system to be formed and consequently the organization of democratic elections; and it was completely changed by the newly elected parliament in 1990 by a compromise of the conservative majority and liberal opposition. There was a saying that time that except the title of the constitution and that the capital city of Hungary was Budapest, nothing else was left from the old constitution. Apart from this thorough transformation of the constitution, more important was the development of constitutionalism that began with the establishment of one of the most powerful constitutional courts in Europe, comparable with the *Gerichtshof* in the Federal Republic of Germany and that of the US Supreme Court.

Indeed, the Hungarian Constitutional Court relied heavily upon the rulings of the German and American courts. Its first president, László Sólyom, developed a whole philosophy for the necessity of “amending” the democratic law-making process, guiding it along higher principles inspired by the Natural Law (conservative-liberal) tradition.

While the triumphal march of liberalism went on undisturbed, the democratic component of the term “liberal democracy” suffered heavy practical blows – and I am going to mention **some of them**.

Firstly, as I have already suggested, there has been no brand new constitution adopted in Hungary that would foster democratic allegiance, and one that would have conferred democratic legitimacy to the new regime. But the situation was even worse. The constitution that took shape in 1990 was either discussed in the Round Table Talks by communists and self-proclaimed politicians – the so-called “democratic opposition” – and then voted by the communist parliament, or was changed through a parliamentary compromise between the governmental majority and opposition in the newly

²⁹⁰ When „the window of opportunity” had been long ago closed, capitalizing on the symbolic failure, the Orbán-government adopted a new constitution in 2011, which entered into effect “for another 1000 years” on 1 January, 2012. It was officially celebrated in many ways: commissioning illustrations from artists, placing the book in every local council on a specially-engineered uniform table (“the table of the constitution”), holding festivities at Ópusztaszer (according to the tradition, this is the place where the nomad Hungarians first agreed to settle and “made the basic arrangements for the country”). As regards the “novelty” of the constitution, there are two, perhaps not so distinct views: the first, most clearly expressed by László Sólyom, former president of the Republic and first president of the Constitutional Court is that the new is not at all new, and it preserves the basic liberties provided for by the old one as well. The serious backlashes are the curtailing of the powers of the Constitutional Court and dismantling the system of checks and balances. The other opinion agrees on previous two issues but adds that the constitution is new inasmuch that it reflects a certain worldview, introduces a certain kind of historical interpretation and a conservative-Christian philosophy into the text (mainly into the legally un-enforceable preamble of it, but giving guidance to the interpretation of the whole constitution). Ongoing debates are emphasizing another aspect of the adoption: it is uncertain how much public support the new constitution has got; there was no popular referendum on it, but it was crafted and voted by two-thirds in the parliament that “represents the majority”.

elected parliament. All was done above the heads of the people. As if the liberal revolution would say to its soldiers: Constitution? None of your business!

Interestingly enough, this “democratic deficit”, accumulated during the events which is usually called “negotiated revolution” or “refolution” (a mixture of reform and revolution; the term belongs to Timothy Garton Ash) didn’t really bother the mass of people. Liberty just in one aspect was its concern: regaining the freedom of the country, regaining sovereignty, drawing out the Soviet Army from Hungary. Of course, there were some popular movements, incipient green rallies against a dam to be built on the Danube, or protests against the destruction of villages in Romania by the most oppressive communist regime, that of Nicolae Ceaușescu... None of these entailed the element of individual liberty.²⁹¹

The reason of this „liberty-blindness” lies in the nature of the Kádár-regime and the history of Hungarian communism, the least oppressive - most liberal²⁹², I would say - communist regime in the region. (I shall return to this controversial subject.)

Secondly, there were some rulings of the Constitutional Court that went straight against the public opinion. The first ruling of this kind was the one that abolished capital punishment. In October 1990, the ruling of the Constitutional Court²⁹³ was certainly a landmark decision. László Sólyom, in his concurring opinion acknowledged that the abolishment of capital punishment was made possible solely on the ground of the personal opinions of the judges and the requirements of the “present time” – and had no foundation whatsoever in the written constitution. To be sure, this ruling ran completely against the opinion of the majority of citizens. The “right to life and dignity of the human being” thus found its way into the non-textual content of the constitution, in the last instance getting its philosophical underpinning in the natural law, and demonstrated once again that there are cases when liberal principles outweigh democratic decision-making.²⁹⁴

Beside the aforementioned conflict, the immediacy of the ruling also should be noted (the arguments consisted within the opinions already doing this). The US and its Supreme Court has

²⁹¹ There is good reason to make a distinction between the two notions, liberty and freedom. Liberty would mean constitutionally protected individual rights and civil liberties. The sense of freedom would be “independence”, sovereignty linked to the liberty of a community, usually a nation. As with its republican aspect, the concept of freedom also entails the freedom of a citizen to have the possibility to be involved in political decision-making. The distinction of liberty and freedom is derived from Hannah Arendt Arendt, *On Revolution*, New York, 1965. and seems to be useful in approaching East-Central European politics: the crippled nature of freedom and the lack of a tradition in the development of individual rights. [See also: H. Pitkin, "Are Freedom and Liberty Twins?", *Political Theory* 16, no. 4. Nov. (1988).]

²⁹² Though Artur Zwolski remarks in a comment: „Every representative of a communist country claims that his or her communist regime was the least oppressive.” we, as analysts, are entitled to compare these regimes according to their true merits. Meanwhile I would like to thank wholeheartedly Artur Zwolski for his tremendous help in proofreading my essay.

²⁹³ L. Sólyom, "A Halálbüntetés Eltörléséről," in *ABH 23/1990*, ed. The Constitutional Court of Hungary, 1990.

²⁹⁴ For a good discussion of this eternal conflict see for example J. Ely, *Democracy and Distrust: A Theory of Judicial Review*, Cambridge, 1980.

arrived – after centuries – to the election of Barrack Obama as president, and dismantled the discrimination in the country. But the leaders of the new democracies in East Central Europe couldn't tell the world and the European Union as they awed and wanted to join "please wait a little bit, we'll assure you, that in the foreseeable future we'll conform to your set standards". The paradox of latecomers is this: they join the club, but they will feel uncomfortable.

To sum it up, there was no "developmental model" at hand, just the revolutionary road was open. A constitutional, liberal revolution couldn't and indeed, shouldn't have been avoided, but in this way the "real", popular revolution was averted, and instantly, political conflicts within the democratic regime itself were created. (But even the constitutional revolution hasn't been carried out consistently, introducing the element of gradualism referred to in the first remark.)

Thirdly, the first impressions working liberal democracy in were rather disappointing.

Several facts should be mentioned here.

a. The first free elections (March 24th and a second round on April 8th) were won by the MDF (Magyar Demokrata Fórum – Hungarian Democratic Forum²⁹⁵), a moderate-conservative party which traced its ideological roots to a "völkisch", "narodnik" intellectual tradition, both left and right wing, being socially sensitive but cultivating also nationalist issues. Its leaders, fully active between the two world wars, during the 60's, 70's, 80's, were half-heartedly anticommunists meanwhile collaborating with the communist regime that in exchange allowed some of their ideas to reach the public. When formed in 1987, the "party" has had no clear ideology and in its ranks we would encounter the representatives of "narodnik" tradition, would-be right-wing extremists, some people of the old aristocracy and socialists (even former members of the ruling communist party), and a few liberals. Its success at the elections can be attributed exactly to this unstructured character, representing to large extent an equally unstructured electorate. Their only pledge before the elections was "don't be afraid", we are the "Calm Power"²⁹⁶, we won't turn your life upside down, we are not radicals and we won't hang communists by their neck to streetlamps. Anyone could find something for himself/herself in this promise, without being worried about making choices. The promise referred in a subtle way even to a well-ordered society; one that is served by a caring state and gets rid of open conflicts and leaves the individual alone in its business. The image that the electorate saw behind the slogan was that of the continuation of the Kádár-regime without János Kádár and without communists. It was already seen what four years later became clear, when the socialists, the reformed former communist party took power with overwhelming majority, that *the past is an unchallenged promise*.

²⁹⁵ Note that there is no mentioning in the name of a „party”.

²⁹⁶ "Force tranquille", initially the slogan of François Mitterand back in 1981. Sometimes the "calm power" is associated with Martin Luther King.

b. On October 25 the largest protest in the new democratic regime took place. The so called “taxi drivers’ blockade” paralyzed Budapest and in many places of the country road traffic was severely obstructed. The protest broke up because fuel prices went up.

The case was a perfect exhibition of a comedy of errors, where every participant misunderstood its place in the democratic play and acted according to old instincts. The cab drivers were revolted and asked vehemently for government regulation to serve their particular interests. Although the law on freedom of assembly was one of the most important laws agreed upon at the Round Table Talks and permitted free elections to be organized, furthermore restricted wanton actions of the communist police in the last phase of regime-change, drivers didn’t ask for permission for demonstration. It was a spontaneous movement which for the protesters and the government alike looked as if it were a true upheaval, revolution even. The government had a certain moral sympathy for “the poor people” that had to suffer under the unjust capitalism which suddenly appeared. At the beginning, they had no clue how to solve the situation, oscillating between using the army to clear the roads and withdrawing altogether. The opposition – mainly liberals (socialists, former communists were quiet: in good old times something like this couldn’t have happened) -, though in parliament, went on to the streets and brought tea to protesters; they felt that alas! the real revolution has come and hoped in secret that government would collapse. In the end, the situation was solved peacefully, but many questions regarding democracy remained open. In the following period conferences were organized that aimed to somehow define the relationship of the rule of law and civil disobedience. Even today, from time to time, the issue comes to the fore and theoretical and practical consequences are weighed. One thing is certain: being in office for only few months, the government lost its popularity, it was considered that it deceived the people and never recovered. The new democratic regime began by proving itself unable to meet the expectations of the regime change; proving that democratic politics is nonetheless politics and not a community dream²⁹⁷.

c. The intrinsic interest of politics (and not much later that of the politicians taking on the form of corruption) prevailed over the interest in participation of the masses in politics.

Many provisions of the new constitution favored governability, reducing the area of participation of citizens in direct political decision-making. Some of these provisions stand out and should be mentioned here.

Perhaps the most important of them is the election of the president of the Republic.

²⁹⁷ Of course, politicians knew this, they were well aware that „dirty politics” will clash with the fairy tale of democracy. József Antall, prime minister in 1990 declared that „we are doomed to be a kamikaze-government” and, during a discussion with MPs of his party: „We won the elections now, but we have lost the forthcoming ones”.

In 1989, on November 26th a referendum was held to establish the form of government in the 3rd republic of Hungary. Among other things, the main question the citizens were asked to respond to was if president should be elected directly by the population or should be elected in parliamentary procedure. The result was extremely close, just only about 6000 votes deciding that the president should be elected by the parliament. The most ardent champion of this solution was the already formed Alliance of Free Democrats (Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége) that succeeded to become the second largest party during the campaign, even with good prospects for winning the elections next year.

The argument for the position of AFD was a clear anticommunist message: we don't want any dictators anymore! A presidential republic will always carry the danger that a single person will seize more and more power and will be able to influence the political decisions more than the representatives of a democratically elected parliament. Furthermore, the long authoritarian, non-democratic history of Hungary should be interrupted.

This argument has been very popular those days, but equally popular was the more democratic counter-argument that wanted the people to retain as much decision-making power as possible, and the direct election of the president is certainly the most important of all of them. This latter position, paradoxically, could have served as much the other position as well: to avoid one-man rule is good to have a balance of powers.

In more general terms, we can say that one position was rooted in an egalitarian political philosophy and the other was embedded in a hundred year political tradition of one-man rule in Hungary. Since the end of the 19th century, Hungary has always had a *ruler*: the Tisza-family, giving prime ministers, Admiral István Horthy, the Stalinist Mátyás Rákosi, János Kádár.

At the end of the day, a very strong parliament has been created, somewhat restricting the participation of citizens in direct decision-making, meanwhile creating a fertile ground for parliamentary dictatorship and thus the possibility of one-man rule couldn't be avoided.

Other provisions of the new constitution pointed in the same direction. Not the parliament got the cabinet and the prime minister, but the cabinet and prime minister got the parliament – the executive always can dominate legislation. The prime minister can be removed only by a “constructive” vote of no confidence as in Germany, Spain or Israel, meaning that a vote of no confidence requires that the opposition, in the same ballot, propose a candidate of their own. Ministers have to face only “censure motion” and no “no confidence vote” (“No Confidence” would lead to compulsory resignation of the minister whereas “Censure” is meant to show disapproval and does not result in the resignation of a minister.)

The governability of the country was a paramount concern for those who shaped the constitution of the newly established democracy, that issuing from dictatorship risked to slip into anarchy. Thus, the road towards democratic authoritarianism was paved.

Fourthly, we have to dwell a little bit on the nature and achievements of the “democratic opposition” that was thought to be the avant-garde of the regime-change.

“Democratic opposition” is a generic term which covers a multitude of attitudes, groups, acts, outlooks. Basically, it is a rejection of the Kádár-communism, a rejection of the compromise it offered after the retaliation of 1956. Following the birth of Solidarność in Poland and the introduction of martial law, democratic opposition in Hungary began to institutionalize: samizdats (half-clandestine publications) were edited (with the spiritual leadership of János Kis, later first leader of the Alliance of Free Democrats) and distributed (mainly through László Rajk’s “boutique” and by the future mayor of Budapest, Gábor Demszky), “flying universities” (private gatherings, where a professor held courses, for example on the true story of the Soviet Union by Miklós Szabó, a famous historian, or Mihály Vajda about the Hungarian Jews and the “Jewish question”) were organized, civil organizations were formed (like the SZETA – Organization for Supporting the Poor, with the leadership of some sociologists, Ottilia Solt and Gábor F. Havas).

The list is not intended to be a comprehensive one, but it exhibits the main threat of the democratic opposition: neither had a single, unified ideology or organization, nor was it a well-defined political movement. On the other hand, what united these scattered political movements was the hope that by its sheer presence they would force the communist regime to show its own limits; that they would reveal that behind the façade of the “most happy barrack” Hungarian communism is the same ghetto as all the others.

“Democratic opposition” was above all a moral attitude open even to a large public, resting on the rejection of “goulash socialism”. The problem though was that Hungarians felt quite well boiling in that goulash (see the “Kádár’s legacy chapter below). For the majority of Hungarians, the democratic opposition was a rebuked, strange “movement”.

This moral attitude drew much of its force from Václav Havel’s “Power of the Powerless”²⁹⁸ and György Konrád’s “Antipolitics”²⁹⁹. When Konrád’s “Antipolitics”³⁰⁰ has been published in

²⁹⁸ Havel and Keane, *The Power of the Powerless: Citizens against the State in Central-Eastern Europe*, Armonk, N.Y., 1985.

²⁹⁹ Though Havel and Konrád didn’t say the same, as János Kis (J. Kis, *A Politika Mint Erkölcsi Probléma*, Irodalom Kft., Budapest, 2004, p.351.) pointed out, the political messages of the two approaches overlap. The state power – even in a liberal-democratic regime – has to be resisted, has to be confronted either with a civil politics (Havel) or with the intellectual power of the individual. Havel speaks about a distinct politics to be constituted outside the sphere of government; Konrád speaks about the intellectual dignity and moral supremacy of the individual over the state.

Hungarian in a “samizdat” edition in 1986, there was a clear sign that “something political” happened, without being clear what kind of politics it was all about. The publication was a proof of political courage, but the political aims were unclear. So the democratic opposition began to organize itself and emerged as a political movement with the publication of the first truly political document. “Social Contract” appeared in June 1987. The first line reads: “Kádár has to go.” Shortly after – in November 1988 – the Alliance of Free Democrats party – one of the main driving forces of the regime-change – was founded. Later, this party called itself AFD-Hungarian Liberal Party

From this short account of the history of the democratic opposition follows that in the wake of the would-be democratic regime we encounter a republican rather than a liberal movement at the forefront of the regime-change.

The overlapping difference of civic republicanism and liberalism is defined by William Galston in this way: „An instrumental rather than intrinsic account of the value of politics forms a key distinction between liberalism and civic republicanism.”³⁰¹ For the republicans, politics has got a value for its own sake (it is intrinsic), for the liberals, politics is not as good, but is needed to achieve some goals, fundamentally safeguarding by political means the moral liberty of individual.

So, when the AFD, during the 90’s increasingly labelled its position as being a liberal one and definitely when it assumed power in 1994 in coalition with the former communists (Hungarian Socialist Party – MSZP) seemed to betray its own traditions, the morality of anti-politics and was accused even of giving legitimacy to its former enemy, communism. When confronted with the day-to-day business of “dirty politics”, party wars and hatred, emerging right wing extremism, scrappy parties, corruption and politician’s self-interest – all what was utterly unknown in the previous 40 years and now is called the “normality of democracy” – the citizens suffered a serious shock. Liberals desperately argued for long-term beneficial constitutional arrangements, liberty of the individual, self-government, Roma, gay, minority rights... Overall, the general feeling was that liberal issues, when carried out successfully, will just worsen the situation. Thus, the need for order was already born, and again, the kádárist order that knew nothing about open conflicts, fuelled nostalgia even in those generations that were born after its extinction.

Until now, I have sketched the meaning of “liberal revolution” in Hungary during the regime-change. As we have seen, “liberal revolution” didn’t rest on a clear-cut liberal ideology³⁰², wasn’t

³⁰⁰ Gy. Konrád, *Antipolitics: An Essay*, San Diego, 1984.

³⁰¹ W. Galston, *Liberal Pluralism : The Implications of Value Pluralism for Political Theory and Practice*, 2002.

³⁰² One has to ask whether there is anything „clear-cut”? But for the purposes of this paper, I stick to Jerzy Szacki’s methodological advice. We will use a “*situational*” definition of liberalism and not a *substantial* one:

entirely liberal, at some points was undemocratic and hasn't had straightforward political representation. The "liberal revolution" seems to be more a republican movement that lost its appeal to the public exactly when it carried out its primary goal, the establishment of a liberal democracy.

The Kádár-legacy

Without Kádár there is *no way* to govern today in Hungary – this is the main lesson learned from 20 years of democratic transition. The "Social Contract" was excessively self-confident when it stated that "Kádár has to go". János Kádár, the successful communist leader died on July the 6th, 1989 (born 1912, Fiume, today Rijeka, Croatia)³⁰³. Few days earlier, on June 16th a large demonstration took place in Budapest during the reburial of Imre Nagy, prime minister during the 1956 revolution, later hanged probably by the orders of Kádár himself. The reburial of Nagy was considered the burial of "kádárism".

Today, in 2013, a headline of an Internet newspaper reads: "Kádár did so well that we cannot give him up." The article sums up a conference that was held when the research papers of a defunct research institute³⁰⁴ were deposited at the Open Society Archives. From those research papers, prepared for the communist leadership and state owned Radio and Television, we gain a fairly detailed picture about the mood and thinking of the people living in Kádár's regime.

In 1989, after the death of János Kádár and in the wake of the regime change, the public opinion ranked high some of the main features of kádárism and the personality of its architect.

More than half of the respondents (50-60%) acknowledged the positive achievements of Kádár's policy. Roughly 20% "loved truly" Kádár: in their eyes "Kádár was the undisputed greatest

what has been the role of liberalism at different points in history. (J. Szacki, *Liberalism after Communism*, Budapest, 1995, pp.23-24.)

³⁰³ For a good biography of János Kádár in English, see R. Gough, *A Good Comrade: Janos Kadar, Communism and Hungary*, 2006.

³⁰⁴ Established 1969 as Tömegkommunikációs Kutatóközpont – TK, from 1988: Magyar Közvéleménykutatási Intézet – MKI: „Mass Opinion Research Institute”.

Hungarian political personality” and the “Benefactor of Hungarians”. 87% said that always has had a “good impression” of him³⁰⁵.

Among the policies which were highly valued by the public was: education provided free of charge (61%), health care provided free of charge (58%), state provided pensions (55%). The people would preserve these.

From the economic point of view, the introduction of the “New Economic Mechanism”, back in 1968, was very much appreciated, when small businesses, ownership of small plots of land (those “surrounding the house”), “a second job”, and “private entrepreneurial communities” were allowed³⁰⁶.

Normal everyday life seemed to include central heating, long holidays, the possession of a fridge, color TV, stereo player, and the possession of a car wasn’t considered something completely out of the ordinary.

How could the killer and communist János Kádár achieve this high degree of legitimacy for his regime that seems to be a lasting legacy?

By now, it is already a commonplace thing among scholars and all sorts of intellectuals that Kádár, out of fear for another revolution, came up with a political and economic gimmick that he himself summarized in the following words: “those who aren’t against us are with us”. (Compared to the other communist regimes based on: “those who aren’t with us are against us”.) If one didn’t challenge publicly some basic taboos of communism and the restricted sovereignty of the country (the presence of Soviet Army as the occupying force), one was not considered the “enemy of the proletariat” and was allowed to mind his business, chase around after extra earnings, build houses, and grow vegetables. Compared to other East Central European countries, a relatively high and ever-increasing standard of living was granted, of course financed by the state, and from the middle of the

³⁰⁵ It is no wonder that opinion polls after the regime change show high acceptance of the old regime compared to the new order. A survey carried out by TÁRKI, a renowned Hungarian research institute in 1991 and 1995, asking whether the old or the new regime is better, showed the following figures for the Visegrád countries:

	Czech Republic	Poland	Slovakia	Hungary
<i>The new regime is worse</i>				
1991	14	23	35	40
1995	23	39	51	51
<i>The new regime is better</i>				
1991	71	51	43	31
1995	57	44	32	26

(Source: Zs. Ferge, "A Rendszerváltás Nyertesei És Vesztesei", *Társadalmi riport*, (1996). – “The winners and losers of the regime change”)

³⁰⁶ These were the key elements of a partly liberalized economy, where the monopoly of state ownership was left intact, but in small breaches the private enterprise was allowed to flourish. This „goulash” system, a mild mixture of socialist ownership and capitalist functioning gave rise to the so called „second economy” and of a class of entrepreneurs that was better off than the official „driving force” of the regime, the proletariat.

70's from foreign loans. While the economy wasn't as sound as it was presented by the official propaganda, the people didn't notice anything but the crumbling of the planned economy.

Two decades (until the mid-90's, more precisely until 1995, the austerity measures introduced by Lajos Bokros, socialist finance minister) the constant policy of consumerism is described by János Kornai, the Harvard economist, as follows: "Hungarian economic policy for at least two decades could be described as seeking at any time to maximize consumption in the present and immediate future at the expense of debt that would devolve on later periods. Initially, this ensured a rapid growth of consumption, but it was already beginning to backfire to some extent after a decade: the rise in production, and with it consumption, began to slow down. Later, a decline in production and consumption set in, partly because of the policy resulting in debt accumulation in previous years. Yet the objective function, maximization of short-term consumption, was still unchanged. It continued, of course, with its sign changed, as minimization of the fall in consumption, and the price of this aim was still accepted: further accumulation of debt."³⁰⁷

Of course, this steady consumerism-based economic policy that overarched into the transition period had a price and had consequences affecting the "morality", "mentality" or as I prefer to put it, "the political culture" of the population at large.

Although a sound interpretation of this claim is still under discussion and further research in undoubtedly needed, I will attempt to make some preliminary remarks that refer first of all to the relationship of the state and the individual.

Péter Tölgyessy sums up the essence of the Kádár-system in a few words: "Taking distance from the Soviet model already had begun in 1953, with Imre Nagy's new phase. Throughout the whole period, the elites in power acted scared by the events of '56, and willy-nilly, they made more and more concessions to the people they were afraid of. The party state abandoned permanent mobilization of the society, it yearned for the depolitization of it. It didn't tolerate the uncontrolled organizations, but seldom made use of criminal law. It concentrated mainly on raising the living standards of every strata of society and for this purpose launched newer and newer reforms. It opened up the country for foreign influences and lived out more and more from loans. An increasingly larger part of the life of the country was regulated by non-market and non-planned economic private deals, non-centrally organized activities gained ground. The autonomy of small circles of citizens advanced slowly."

The individual in the Kádár-regime told the power: "I am willing to accept your rules, if you are willing to provide me with entitlements." In contrast, the "liberal revolution" will tell the citizen:

³⁰⁷ For a comprehensive economic discussion of the "goulash communism" see J. Kornai, "Paying the Bill for Goulash Communism: Hungarian Development and Macro Stabilization in a Political- Economy Perspective", *Social Research* 63, no. 4 (1996).

“I won’t interfere with your desires, but I am willing to provide you with the rules that will enable you to accomplish what you want.” These two maxims differ to such an extent that is almost impossible to bridge the gap – a seemingly abortive tentative in Hungary.

The equality of entitlements (employment, wages, state provided free education, free health care, passport for travelling to the West) and the inequality of opportunities (housing, licenses for doing business, land ownership) developed a double thinking concerning the state. As far as equality is concerned, the state was able to protect the citizen against sudden changes in his or her life, and along the inequality dimension forced the citizen to bargain, to escape state control and pursue individualistic ends that would enable him or her to be better off than one's fellow citizens. Everyone could feel that one is part of the middle class, but within that middle class there were those fortunate who succeeded in finding loopholes. (Of course, there were poor people, but they were well hidden behind a full employment policy. After the system change, the so-called “unemployment behind the gates”³⁰⁸ surfaced suddenly, affecting the poorest strata of society, mainly the Roma population.)

Basic security was granted, but one had to bargain, cheat, and have good connections, find back doors, be cloaked. Competition that was encouraged ran for favours, class envy and egoism poisoned the relationship of people, making them unfit for cooperation. Market economy behavior made its way into a community that was stripped of a market able to foster trust.

State interference is deeply penetrating everyday life and the citizen has a personal, twofold “hate-love” relationship to it.

Parallel to the “liberalization” in economy, there certainly went on a “liberalization” in culture as well. Except the aforementioned taboos that were untouchable in public and private discourse (the latter monitored by the secret police) a relatively free flow of ideas was permitted or tolerated. The already mentioned systematic sociological research has been possible, even if it was controlled by the party, and done for the political leadership. Although censorship was in place, it was mild. The other, dark side of this cultural policy seldom was to be seen, but nonetheless manifested itself. When in 1977 some intellectuals signed a petition as a token of solidarity with the ’77 Charter, they were sacked and forbidden to publish, when Miklós Haraszti wrote a book about the situation of the worker in communism, the book was prohibited to appear, and so on and so forth.

The cultural policy was framed by György Aczél (Budapest, August 31, 1917. – Vienna, December 6, 1991), comrade and companion to János Kádár since 1956. He was the one who

³⁰⁸ A very important notion of socialist – i.e. based on state ownership – economy. In communism, it was compulsory to work and the state had to offer a workplace for everyone. On the other hand, socialist companies were interested to employ people with low wages, because after the New Economic Mechanism was introduced, they paid taxes according to the medium wage at the company. This created the so-called „unemployment behind the gates” resulting in people having a workplace, without having work. This kind of “unemployment” is estimated to reach even 20% at its peak.

formulated in 1957 in a letter the famous principle of the TTT (Tiltani, Túrni, Támogatni – in English PPP - Prohibit, Permit, Promote) that later became the slogan of the official cultural policy until 1985. The PPP meant a careful, rather pragmatic equilibrium and the abandoning of ideological indoctrination. Besides the atmosphere of a “liberal” cultural and intellectual life, the policy achieved an important goal that even hadn’t been intended. In a non-coercive manner, it succeeded in creating the impression – and the practice, indeed –, that only a discourse with the power can generate “results”, and that it is utterly useless for intellectuals to communicate with each other. A very effective fragmentation of intellectual life emerged, and an equally effective control of the intellectual life had been made possible for the communist leadership, disarming from the outset any disarray.

Thus, the political culture of “kádárism” is characterized by a highly distorted entrepreneurialism, a shortage-bond consumerism, a civic culture that is broken up by individualism, slipping into egoism, trust-less competition, a hierarchical discourse, where the *partner* is the power and horizontal, peer-to-peer discourses are rare or missing³⁰⁹.

³⁰⁹ Is this what Piotr Sztompka [P. Sztompka, "Civilizational Incompetence: The Trap of Post-Communist Societies", *Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 2 (April), no. 22 (1993).], in terms of political culture, calls “civilizational incompetence”? In the case of Hungary in some respects yes, it is, in others no, Sztompka cannot capture the peculiarities of the Hungarian situation. But I have made good use of Sztompka's „political culture” definition and have analyzed the Hungarian case according to the components proposed by him: „entrepreneurial culture”, „civic culture”, „discourse culture”, „everyday culture” which are the elements of a democratic political culture. Besides, I fully agree with Sztompka's methodological approach (and his reference to Tocqueville): „The real meaning of the revolutions of 1989 cannot be grasped if we do not take the cultural-civilizational dimension into serious account. Without turning our focus to the level of culture, to the realm of intangibles and imponderables, "soft" variables, we shall neither be able to comprehend nor to overcome the obstacles and blockades that inhibit the processes running at the more tangible, "hard" institutional, or organizational level.” (P. Sztompka, "The Lessons of 1989 for Sociological Theory", in *Building Open Society and Perspectives of Sociology in East-Central Europe*, ed. Sztompka, Piotr, Krakow: Proceedings of the ISA Conference for East Central Europe, 1996, p.19.) This lesson is drawn from those misconceptions that were forwarded by the “institutionalist” advisors in the first period of the transition. From ashore it was hard to see how “a ship is rebuilt at sea”. “One mechanism by which the past makes itself felt in the present is socialization and cultural tradition. Citizens in post-communist societies developed their beliefs and desires, values and frames, roles and routines in past periods of life that is under the communist regime or even earlier. We cannot expect those value patterns and ways of thinking to change all at once. They will continue to be pervasive after the political regime change, at least for a certain period of time. "Mental residues of communism" are usually stereotyped in the following way: people in Eastern Europe developed, under the old regime, bad work habits, contempt for effort and initiative, a fear of innovation, and an inclination to trade the expression of their loyalty for patronage and protection. Egalitarian and envious attitudes create reactions both against excessive poverty and excessive wealth. Due to their experiences under communist rule, citizens do not believe in the rule of law, tend to distrust political elites, and they are rather skeptical that political and economic reforms will bring about the desired outcomes. Conversely, we should bear in mind attitudes and skills unofficially cultivated under the old regime. **People in Eastern Europe developed virtues such as self-reliance, flexibility, effort, and inventiveness in order to cope with the vast inefficiencies of the past system. Those "unofficial virtues" turn out to be well-suited to the needs of a market economy.** In addition, we can observe the survival of pre-1949 attitudes throughout the region. Traditional values such as religion or various craft traditions which were preserved during the communist period could become important again. Likewise, traditional animosities between ethnic groups may reemerge.” (Elster, Offe, and Preuss, *Institutional Design in Post-Communist Societies - Rebuilding the Ship at Sea*, Cambridge, 1998, p.61. - emphasis added. A full “translation” into plain English should be provided here! But if we concentrate only on the sentence in bold we have the following list of “unofficial virtues” which in fact were the “official” ones: “self-reliance” =egoism; “flexibility”=cheating and lying; “effort”=theft, corruption; “inventiveness”=duplicitry and tax-evasion. All these developed during the communist era in relation with the

As an ultimate consequence, communism went almost unnoticed, and the expectation of the population after the transition negotiated by the elites was clearly the continuation of the practices of the old regime. A revolution which in fact was a counterrevolution without revolution.

Of course, the expectations for a counterrevolution that won't change too much couldn't be fulfilled during a revolution. However, *gradualism* remained the order of the day for politicians. When forced by external, mainly economic circumstances, politics had to abandon gradualism and ran straight into defeat.

In 1990, the Antall-government had to retreat when it wanted to introduce market-prices for gas (the taxi drivers' blockade which was discussed earlier).

The second free government led by Gyula Horn, after creating the self-image that would bring back the "kádárism"³¹⁰, at the brink of economic collapse had to introduce austerity measures in 1995. The socialist-liberal government, to a large extent due to these measures, lost its majority in parliament in 1998.

The first Orbán-government (1998-2002), building on the macroeconomic results of the austerity program of the previous government, at the beginning dared to pursue a reform agenda, but as elections were approaching, from 2000 onwards, it couldn't withstand to dishing out again. Surprisingly, the government lost its popularity at the elections, partly because the leadership didn't conform with Kádár's picture – "they were too arrogant".

The socialist prime minister Péter Medgyessy boldly introduced "kádárist" measures by raising the salary of a teacher by 50% and led the country in big economic trouble, debalancing the budget for 10 years. Although very popular ("a politician that has kept his promise") he was overthrown by his fellow party members because they saw that his policies would lead to an economic breakdown.

state and marked the "manners" in society and are especially ill-suited for a market economy. The enormous difficulties of institution-building are suggested by Tocqueville: "Laws are always unstable unless they are founded on the manners of a nation; and manners are the only durable and resisting power in a people." (*Democracy in America*, ch.XVI - *Of the Jury in the United States Considered as a Political Institution*.) [Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. Eduardo Nolla, trans., James T. Schleifer, Indianapolis, 2010, p.447.]

³¹⁰ The „bread that costs 3,60 Forints" (last time in 1979 this was the price of 1 kilogram of bread). Though a topic for discussion even in 2013, when the former prime minister died, this „campaign promise" never had been uttered. Gyula Thürmer, the leader of the Worker's Party (the outspoken heir of the former communist party), in the party newsletter wrote an obituary: "We need someone who will make Hungarian people believe that they need not worry. What was good in socialism, will be carried along, just we will add everything that is good in capitalism. This someone became Gyula Horn. He stood in front of the people and for a moment the people saw Kádár re-appear, and everything good that Kádár meant. The 3,60 bread, safety-of-life, work." (*Szabadság*, 29. June, 2013.)

Ferenc Gyurcsány followed Medgyessy with extended “reform-programs”. After he won the elections in 2006, he confessed at a party meeting with the MPs that “day and night we have lied to the people”. He meant to say, that reforms are inevitable, and “kádárist” consumerism should be abandoned. It was a true sentence, that caused one of the most dangerous turmoils in the country.

The last blow for his government was the so called “social referendum” in 2008. A referendum on revoking some medical and tuition fees was held in Hungary on 9 March 2008. The proposals would *cancel* government reforms which introduced doctor visit fees paid per visitation and medical fees paid per number of days spent in hospital as well as tuition fees in higher education. All three were supported by an overwhelming, (82-84%) majority of voters.

From this point on, it was absolutely clear that “kádárist” cannot be overlooked if one wants to preserve power in Hungary.

But this snapshot is a deliberately one-sided presentation of the political events that is meant to underline the *policy* heritage of “kádárist” and to single out the role of the state in maintaining those policies.

Some conclusions

Now, we are ready to make one more step closer to the actual situation, refraining ourselves from taking a stance or to enter into a detailed description³¹¹.

Instead, we have at our hands the texts, speeches of Viktor Orbán in which he makes pretty clear what will be, or what the cultural background of his governance is.

In September 2008, one and a half year before the elections, already with more than fair chances of winning, at Kötse (a regular gathering place for right-wing intellectuals and politicians), he delivered a talk in which he openly spoke about the political culture he intended to replace with a different one.

³¹¹ For anyone who wants to join the debate over the “nature” of the actual Hungarian government the Internet offers plenty of pros and cons. In English one of the most informed, though naturally biased (or objective – depends on standpoint) sources are the “Hungarian Spectrum” blog of Eva S. Balogh at <http://hungarianspectrum.wordpress.com/>. For an account of two years of Fidesz-government see a highly critical one: András Bozóki: „The Crisis of Democracy in Hungary, 2012” at <http://www.deliberatelyconsidered.com/2012/02/the-crisis-of-democracy-in-hungary-2012/>, 20 August 24, 2013. Maybe the best analysis of the first 20 months of the Orbán-government and the far reaching consequences, mainly from economic point of view, but not only, is Kornai, “Centralization and the Capitalist Market Economy,” *Népszabadság*, February 1 2012.; also at http://nol.hu/belfold/centralization_and_the_capitalist_market_economy?ref=sso, 20 August, 2013.

In his interpretation the “leftist liberal political culture” has got two pillars: the relationship between the individual and the community that has lost its equilibrium in favor of the individual, the other one being the failure of the faith in “scientific capitalism”, in the “omnipotence” of the market. This culture has failed not only in Hungary, but in the whole world. Now the gates are wide open, and a new culture is ready to enter the scene: the state should be strengthened, a political alliance with the Catholic Church forged, and a genuine “Hungarian thinking” has to be placed at the starting point of searching for solutions for all the problems that a government is confronted with.

What is needed for this culture to win a definitive victory? Money, ideology and voters. These resources then will allow a “central political force field” to be created. That will allow Fidesz to *exercise*³¹² (and by the same token: to stay in) power for the following 20 years.

In this talk all the elements of a political creed and even an outline of a political direction are present.

“Strengthening the state” means centralization, a policy that constantly is covering more and more fields: health care, education, pensions, tobacco shops, casinos, state ownership in companies...

The Catholic Church became a political force, the Fidesz made an alliance with a barely existing party, the Christian Democrats, the brand new constitution is permeated with the tenets of the church. This means also that the balance between individual and community has been shifted towards the community. On another occasion Viktor Orbán acknowledged that the constitution of 2012 – that is “solid as granite” and is perceived as representing the organization of the “Magyar life” for the next millennia – is not a liberal constitution anymore; is not the safeguard of individual liberty, but the “right balance” between “responsibilities and entitlements”.

The “Hungarian way of looking at the world” manifests itself in the “freedom-fighting” against the European Union and for the “Magyars outside the borders of Hungary”, Hungarian

³¹² “Exercising power” means that one has extensive institutional and non-institutional powers even if he or she is not in the government. This “external power” (“outside” the government) is exercised through individuals that were appointed for a long period as leaders of different governmental institutions, extra-governmental bodies, through granting ownership to different loyal groups in society, through an equally loyal administration, bureaucratic corps. The distinction between “force” and “power” might be the key to understanding the political ideals of Viktor Orbán.

Interesting research proposal is that of Robert Rohrschneider (R. Rohrschneider, “Learning Democracy: Do Democratic Values Adjust to New Institutions?”, in *Political Culture in Post-Communist Europe*, ed. Detlef Pollack et al., England: Ashgate, 2003.). He distinguishes between three core democratic values: *restraint* (willingness to accept losing a political or economic competition and not abusing a victorious one); *self-reliance* (acting on one’s behalf, basically autonomy) and *corresponding societal values* (pp.49-50). These categories, at first sight, are utterly different from those embedded in the “force-theory”.

citizenship granted for them, thus “national unification” without changing the borders, continuous tensions with the Romanians over the autonomy of the Hungarian “Székely”³¹³ land.

But the more interesting notion is the “central political force field” that has a twofold meaning.

It is the name of the constant, all-encompassing effort to provide the means – money, ideology, voters – for the building blocks of the new culture. In its second meaning, it is a communication strategy that is intended to limit debates within the borders of the new culture: to define the topics of the public debates, direct communication of the power with the population, media regulation, outcasting any “alien” approach as illegitimate.

Is this foundation an appealing conservative nationalist ideology, a new interpretation of democracy and state, populism, or just an emerging autocracy³¹⁴ in building up its powers? These are the questions that are discussed at length and breadth not only in Hungary, but in Europe and even in the US.

Anyway, for the purposes of this paper we may conclude that the counterrevolution we have discussed earlier has got a name – National Cooperation System (NCS)³¹⁵ –, an ideology, a leader, backing – two-thirds in the parliament and large rallies under the guise of an-NGO called “Peace March” (partly organized by the government itself for its own support) and finally policies.

More importantly, the NCS stems from a general disappointment with what happened in the last 20 or so years. As we have seen, its leader has capitalized on the perception of the failures of the liberal revolution, launching a counterrevolution without revolution, comprising different restoration tendencies. Most recently (July 26, 2014 at the Summer School in Tusványos, Romania) Viktor Orbán uttered the final sentences: “Hungarian nation is not a mere composition of private individuals, is a community which must be organized, strengthened, built. In this respect the new Hungarian state that we build today in Hungary is an illiberal state and not a liberal one.” And shouldn't be thoroughly democratic as well. It has to take into account those successful examples of China, India, Singapore, Turkey and Russia.

³¹³ A compact “székely” population of roughly 600.000 people, living in South-East Transylvania, representing 65% of the population in three counties.

³¹⁴ It would be very easy, and indeed very misleading, to say, that *authoritarianism* has a long tradition in Hungary, and democracy has not. From the end of the 19th century we always encounter a “strong man” who is able to have more influence on the course of events, even holding a certain monopoly of the power, that any other politician. The Tisza family, István Bethlen, Béla Kun, István Horthy, Mátyás Rákosi, János Kádár and now Viktor Orbán. Some of them acted within a quasi-democratic framework, some were dictators and nowadays formally there is a democratic system. “Strong man” doesn't mean unequivocally authoritarianism. Nonetheless in Hungary, as in many, if not all, post-communist countries, the need for a “strong man” is somehow linked to the “disorderly democracy” that emerged after the transition.

³¹⁵ Nemzeti Együttműködés Rendszere - NER

The NCS is based on a thorough learning of history. Anti-Trianon feelings (in 1918 the Paris peace treaty – known in Hungary as Trianon – dismembered the Habsburg Monarchy and the partly sovereign Hungary, leaving a large Hungarian population in successor states, as Romania, Slovakia, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia and Austria), the symbolism of the 30's and 40's, antibolshevism (20's and 50's), the Kádár legacy (60's, 70's, middle of 80's), statism (state ownership and state care and the state providing order) are a perfect mixture of nationalistic and non-democratic elements that gain democratic, i.e. populist, support today. Most of the public policies, in one way or another, are based on this bulk of historical reminiscences, disappointments, past glories and political failures of the present.

So, we may reiterate the main argument of our paper: *the past is an unchallenged promise*.

However, the question in the title of this essay is rather a rhetorical one, and cannot be answered right away. If Hungary is halfway on the road of learning democracy, establishing a democratic tradition in a country that has got no democratic tradition or is moving loftily ahead on a dead end road – is to be seen in the future³¹⁶. Is it a “Sonderweg” (“excepcionalism”, special path) or is a typical case of all post-communist countries? Of course, further comparative studies are needed and further developments must occur. However, from the intellectual point of view, it is an interesting story³¹⁷.

³¹⁶ The same questions arise, perhaps not so strikingly, in many post-transitional democracies. Delegitimizing the regime-change and creating an institutional and cultural framework for an illiberal democracy is a challenge for these countries: “nearly twenty-five years after the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe, the transitions to and consolidations of democracy in the region remain incomplete and, in some cases, face grave threats”. [R. Daniel Kelemen, “Message from the editor”, *European Politics and Society – Newsletter of the European Politics and Society Section of the American Political Science Association*, (Winter 2013), pp.3-4.]

Jan Kubik suggests that: „In order to develop a robust theory of the illiberal and authoritarian challenge in post-communist Europe, we need to explain both the nature of the delayed popular response to the tribulations of early transformations and the success or failure of illiberal discourses” („Poland: Illiberal Temptation Rejected (so far)”, *European Politics and Society – Newsletter of the European Politics and Society Section of the American Political Science Association*, (Winter 2013), p.23.

³¹⁷ In very harsh words Kim Lane Scheppele, a Princeton legal scholar calls this story a Frankenstein-experiment in constructing a „Frankenstate”: „Victor Frankenstein’s monster brought fear and horror to all those who saw it. But Viktor Orbán’s monster state does Frankenstein one better. Orbán has mastered the art of legal suture so well that his Frankenstate can live and work in the European Union. People can tell that there is something not normal about this state, but it is hard to say what it is. It looks like a democracy; it talks like a democracy. It doesn’t look or act like your father’s authoritarianism. It is the new, improved, democratic-edition Frankenstate.” [„Not Your Father’s Authoritarianism: The Creation of the »Frankenstate«”, *European Politics and Society – Newsletter of the European Politics and Society Section of the American Political Science Association*, (Winter 2013)] http://www.academia.edu/2773381/Reflections_on_Democracy_in_Eastern_Europe_5_author_forum_.

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Hungary's Global Opening to an Interpolar World³¹⁸

Abstract

This study wishes to contribute to the relatively limited circle of academic publications on Hungary's foreign policy – in particular, in the second decade of the twenty-first century. First, it looks at major foreign policy priorities since the change of the political system in 1989 and their maintenance in the country's external affairs policy agenda, together with the omnipresent desire to get re-positioned “rightly”, “back” into the international community. The intention of the authors is to investigate the validity and possible execution of a “global opening” in an increasingly “interpolar globality”, and therefore, to provide a detailed analysis of the Hungarian “turn towards to East”. The new foreign policy document of the country contains a re-positioning of Hungarian presence in five priority regions of the world, among which emphasis has obviously been laid on Central Europe and the Visegrád Group. The paper offers a critical analysis of both the potentials and challenges of the global opening.

Keywords: Hungary, foreign policy, global opening, Eastern turn

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Introduction

After the change of the political system which took place towards the end of the 1980s, it was obvious for countries of the former Soviet Bloc that major (re)orientation in their foreign policies will be directed towards the European Union, with the aspiration to gain membership as soon as possible, but preferably in the early 2000s. In the case of Hungary, three pillars of the foreign affairs strategy signaled a firm alignment with the community of values she had always wanted to share – not only the official political rhetoric, but also what the society at large thought were centered on the move “back to Europe”. The three pillars covered European accession (as top number-one priority for the country), joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), therefore, strengthening the trans-Atlantic alliance, and neighborhood policy with a heavy focus on Hungarian communities across the Carpathian basin (and beyond). Developing relations with Moscow and the “East” was put aside at a fast pace, which may be explained as part of the strategy of keeping distance from “Soviet ties”, and demonstrating that the country was ready to rejoin the European community. However, “cordial relations” with the Russian Federation and the other states that came into being after the dissolution of the Soviet Union were established and also *immediate and strong support was given to Yeltsin in the days of the August 1991 coup*.³¹⁹

In the course of the first fifteen years of the democratic republic, until Hungary gained membership in the European Union in 2004, the country was heavily engaged in building links with Western European countries, the United States of America and the leading international institutions of the gradually globalizing world. In the meantime, all Hungarian governments had a fundamental task – also as the constitution of that time obliged them to do – to *take responsibility for the Hungarians living in the diaspora in the neighboring states*, and to contribute to the creation of a *united, secure and stable Europe* by helping the Western Balkans integrate *as fully and quickly as possible into the Euro-Atlantic community*.³²⁰

A determined step toward the implementation of a “global opening” to the rapidly changing world came with the government taking office in 2010. A new position of “Deputy State Secretary for Global Affairs” was established in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, underscoring the strong intention

³¹⁹ G. Jeszenszky, ‘Hungary’s Foreign Policy Dilemmas after Regaining Sovereignty’, *Society and Economy*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (2007), p. 47, at <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1556/SocEc.29.2007.1.2>> .

³²⁰ T. Magyarics, ‘Hungary and Southeast Europe – Preface’, *International Relations Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2010), p. 1.

to bring about changes in foreign policy, and thus to reposition Hungary on the world map. Although the “global opening” concept *gained momentum only after the [second] Orbán-government came to power*, already under the Gyurcsány-government the Hungarian External Relations Strategy of 2008 *realised that Hungary needs to intensify its global presence, and the country needs to address issues of global importance with an increasing visibility*.³²¹

A strategic document got the green light after the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union was handed over to the forthcoming Troika-member Poland for the second half of 2011. In one of the most important foreign policy strategies since the political regime change, the Hungarian state clearly argued for a policy of “opening” to the increasingly global and transnational world. Our paper will offer an overview of this strategic decision and provide details in particular about Hungary’s redefined stance on the “East”, including China, Russia and Central Asia, as well as the Middle East, but also on sub-Saharan Africa. In light of both a progressively evolving global “actorness” of the EU on the supranational level and reaffirmed cooperation with the Visegrád countries, pursuing a stronger representation of regional interests, Hungarian foreign policy will be critically analyzed.

The study seeks first to look at major foreign policy priorities since the establishment of the first democratically elected government after the collapse of the Soviet-satellite system and their maintenance on the country’s external affairs policy agenda, together with the omnipresent desire to get positioned “rightly” in the international community. Second, the validity and potential execution of a ‘global opening’ in an increasingly “interpolar globality” will be investigated, which will then be followed by the detailed analysis of the Hungarian “turn towards to East”, which – in its “global” framework – also contains a re-positioning of Hungarian presence in sub-Saharan Africa. Third, some major considerations will be summarized with regard to Hungary’s Central European policy, in particular, as the country declared the year 2013 as its “Central European Year” because of the rotating presidencies of the Visegrád Group and the Central European Initiative (CEI) it holds. Finally, a set of concluding thoughts will encapsulate the paper’s most important points.

³²¹ A. Rácz, ‘An Unintended Consequence: Is the Hungarian Commitment to the EU’s Enlargement and Neighbourhood Policy Weakening? Hungarian Engagement in Eastern Europe’, *Draft Paper* (2012), p. 6, at <<http://www.uaces.org/documents/papers/1201/racz.pdf>>, 9 July 2013.

Hungary's foreign policy priorities since 1989

There has been a consistency in prioritizing Hungarian foreign policy since the change of the political system as for all the governments of the country until 2010, when the Euro-Atlantic integration and good neighbour policy in the Carpathian Basin provided the key elements for long-term strategic thinking. Right after the first free elections in the spring of 1990, the main objective of József Antall's government – backed by all the six parties in parliament – was *the re-orientation of* [the country's] *foreign policy*.³²² Signing the first bilateral agreement with the new Russia in December 1991, gaining membership in the Council of Europe a month earlier, and launching the Visegrád cooperation together with Poland and Czechoslovakia on 15 February 1991³²³ – Antall's own initiative – were all significant steps on the new (democratic) road of statehood. The encouragement and strengthening of peaceful cooperation with the neighboring countries seemed evident for Hungary in any geopolitical sense. The country needed to face the increasing number of states in its vicinity, as well as the fragmentation of the region with all the political, diplomatic and security-related consequences of the escalating crisis in the Balkans.³²⁴ As Dunay clearly points out, *regional cooperation in Central Europe had no roots that could serve as a point of reference. East-Central Europe seemed doomed to fall back to fragmentation and eventual national rivalries*³²⁵, which basically cried out for a change: to foster a new era of regional ties in a newly defined, enlarging Europe, into which most of the countries of the former Soviet bloc felt to “return”³²⁶.

Tamás Magyarics rightly claims that *the external framework of Hungarian foreign relations changed drastically on May 1, 2004 when the country [...] joined the EU*.³²⁷ Accession to the desired international institutions – the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation – succeeded, paving the way to the process of “Europeanization”, which, according to Rácz, *has* [since]

³²² G. Jeszenszky, ‘Hungary’s Foreign Policy Dilemmas...’, p. 45.

³²³ Ibid., pp. 47-48.

³²⁴ L. J. Kiss, ‘Magyarország szomszédsági kapcsolatainak jövője’, *Grotius* (2007), p. 3, at, <http://www.grotius.hu/doc/pub/FJFDTM/kiss_j_laszlo_magyarorszag_szomszedsagi_kapcsolatok.pdf>, 4 August 2013.

³²⁵ P. Dunay, ‘Subregional Cooperation in East-Central Europe: the Visegrád Group and the Central European Free Trade Agreement’, *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Politikwissenschaft*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (2003), p. 46.

³²⁶ A number of scholarly articles dealt with how former Soviet satellite countries communicated their aspirations for EU and NATO memberships. See, for example, K. Henderson (ed.), *Back to Europe. Central and Eastern Europe and the European Union*, London 1999.

³²⁷ T. Magyarics, ‘From Semi-periphery to Semi-periphery: Hungary’s Foreign Relations under the Socialist-free Democrat Governments (2002-2010)’ in M. Majer [et al.] (eds.), *Panorama of Global Security Environment*, Bratislava 2010, p. 67.

*significantly changed domestic political landscapes and also the norms and institutions of policy-making, including foreign policy.*³²⁸

From a number of angles for some years, in the context of its new international socialization, which basically meant a kind of *acclimatization to the new policy-making setting*³²⁹, Hungary was also expected to meet, among other things, the challenges to *existing identities and interests of national officials, their conceptions of statehood, and relationships between national and supranational.*³³⁰ Working along the lines of the European community of values never meant for the country to loosen its position on the assertion of Hungarian identity and interests, just the opposite: to *effectively advance national interests in all aspects that go beyond Hungary's borders, executing a value-based foreign policy*³³¹ as a Member State of the European Union. The main aim of the policy of the Orbán-government since 2010 has been declared to “be friendly in all directions”, with the Visegrád group as the “core”³³². In addition, Central European – including Hungarian – *transition experience can be a key contribution to the development of the EU' democracy promotion policies.*³³³

As for priorities, according to many scholars and experts of international relations, the so-called “Eastern opening doctrine” has become Hungary's fourth major diplomatic objective in addition to the remaining three of the policy of the nation, regional policy in Central Europe and active involvement in Euro-Atlantic integration. “Global opening”, also accommodating the concept of the East, *is meant in a geographical sense, such as new links with the Middle East, North Africa, Asia and Latin America*, but also including that *Hungary must find areas beyond traditional foreign policy and security policy where it can strengthen its role; [for example, areas covering] climate policy, sustainable development and water policy.*³³⁴

In order to enable the reader to understand the scope and main considerations of such policy, the next section will elaborate upon the dominant streams in the international arena, which it is

³²⁸ A. Rácz, ‘A Limited Priority: Hungary and the Eastern Neighbourhood’, *Perspectives*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (2011), p. 143.

³²⁹ S. S. Denca, ‘Europeanization of Foreign Policy: Empirical Findings from Hungary, Romania and Slovakia’, *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, Vol. 5, No. 3 (2009), p. 402.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 391.

³³¹ ‘Hungary's Foreign Policy after the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union’, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary, 2011, p. 3, at <http://www.kormany.hu/download/e/cb/60000/foreign_policy_20111219.pdf>, 20 July 2013.

³³² ‘How the World Looks from Hungary: Hungary's Foreign Policy’, *The Economist*, 13 August 2010, at <http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches/2010/08/hungarys_foreign_policy>, 9 July 2013.

³³³ B. Szent-Iványi, ‘The EU's Support for Democratic Governance in the Eastern Neighbourhood: The Role of Transition Experience from the New Member States’, *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 66, No. 7 (2014), p. 1108.

³³⁴ Quoting Szabolcs Takács in ‘Hungary in Good Position to Strengthen Ties with Asia, Says Foreign Ministry Secretary’, Hungarian News Agency (MTI), 18 July 2012, at <<http://www.politics.hu/20120718/hungary-in-good-position-to-strengthen-ties-with-asia-says-foreign-ministry-secretary/>>, 9 July 2013.

supposed to take into account, along with the most relevant set of aspirations, sufficiently realistic for the country.

The idea of “Global Opening” in an age of inter polar relations

When a country like Hungary – a middle-sized European state – makes attempts to become more open to the global world, she recognizes that it is the only valid and plausible behavior in the long run, keeping in mind that she wants to keep fostering its national interests first and foremost. This attitude is easy to validate as inter polarity expects that countries behave in such a way; in fact, the changing “post-American” international context, the fading away of the “unipolar moment” and the evolution of the multipolar set of relations have an impact on Europe and the foreign and neighborhood policy of Hungary.³³⁵ Although multipolarity and the debate whose interpretations have stirred in scholarly communities – also offering the ground for Grevi’s theory – *does not necessarily presuppose the existence of three or more states of basically equal power capabilities*, according to Smith (2012). *It does, however, suggest a widespread acceptance and inculcation of the belief that there is essential equivalence amongst several states.*³³⁶ William Wohlforth (2007) warns us to remain cautious enough with *today’s multipolar mania*³³⁷, so that we can profoundly relate the position of the emerging actors to that of the US and foresee the potential redistribution of power in the international system in an increasingly multipolar environment. One of the most decisive arguments of Fareed Zakaria about a “post-American world” draws our attention to the “rise of the rest”, meaning the growing influence of emerging powers coming from the Global South. We can agree with him that this rise is *at heart an economic phenomenon, but it has consequences for nearly every other sphere of life*. His “post-American world” is not an *anti-American world*, but *one defined and directed from many places and by many people*.³³⁸ A world increasingly possessing more centers of gravity, one that is better referred to as “inter polar”, as the context embraces the concept of a transnational setting with more “poles” or powers interwoven in deepening interdependence, in an interest-driven, problem-oriented and pragmatic way.³³⁹

³³⁵ See L. J. Kiss, ‘Magyarország...’, p. 18.

³³⁶ M. A. Smith, *Power in the Changing Global Order. The US, Russia and China*, Cambridge 2012, p. 54.

³³⁷ W. Wohlforth, ‘Unipolar Stability. The Rules of Power Analysis’, *Harvard International Review*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (2007), p. 46.

³³⁸ F. Zakaria, *The Post-American World. Release 2.0*, New York 2012, p. 4.

³³⁹ See: G. Grevi, ‘The Interpolar World: A New Scenario’, *ISS Occasional Papers*, No. 79 (2009), at <<http://www.iss.europa.eu>>, 18 March 2013.

In 1999, Huntington introduced the notion of a “uni-multipolar” hybrid system, *with one superpower and several major powers [...] that are preeminent in areas of the world without being able [yet] to extend their interests and capabilities as globally as the United States.*³⁴⁰ This can be taken as fair observation with the reservation that by 2013 even more changes have occurred in the system into the direction of rather more than less multipolarity.³⁴¹

Although in recent years international media have been engaged with the “rise of the dragon” from the Far East, Zakaria is again right when he claims that *it is not [only] China that is rising. Emerging powers on every continent have achieved political stability and economic growth and are becoming active on the global stage.*³⁴² In our case, looking at such a Central European country and its redefined foreign policy about the global world, we can unanimously pose the questions: What are Hungary’s relations with these entities? How can Hungary get engaged with processes generated by these emerging forces? How can Hungary envisage its place and role in an interpolar order?

There is no doubt that every country of the “Global North” – and as long as Hungary is a member of the European Union it is considered to belong to the more developed part of the world – it needs to have an idea how to position the emerging powers in their foreign policy priorities, or, to look at it from the opposite direction, how to position themselves with regard to the dynamics generated by these actors.

Foreign Minister János Martonyi believes that in the global, multipolar world Hungary tries to enhance its weight in international politics – and the country could do this during its rotating presidency when, for example, *it was the embassy of Hungary in Tripoli which served as the diplomatic mission of the EU since the Union itself had no representation there*³⁴³ – pursuing Hungary’s economic interests just like the Americans, German, French, Italians, Poles and others do³⁴⁴ in terms of their own. From this perspective, the new policy is sufficiently pragmatic to attempt to position Hungary in the global arena, and more importantly, to push the country’s crisis-ridden economy and society back on the right track of development. Parallel with the policy of global opening, however, *another new element has appeared in the foreign policy discourse of Hungary, and in particular in Prime Minister Orbán’s discourse, namely the “Eastern opening” (keleti nyitás).*³⁴⁵ This – in our opinion – is easy to get accommodated into the overarching approach emphasizing

³⁴⁰ S. P. Huntington, ‘The Lonely Superpower’, *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78, No. 2 (1999), p. 35.

³⁴¹ See more of this issue: I. Tarrósy, ‘“Chimerican” Interests, Africa Policies and Changing US-China Relations’, *Security Policy Affairs*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (2013), forthcoming.

³⁴² F. Zakaria, *The Post-American World...*, p. xii.

³⁴³ E. N. Rózsa, ‘Libya and the Hungarian EU Presidency’, *HIIA Policy Brief*, No. 14 (2011), at <http://www.hiia.hu/pub/displ_eng.asp?id=TVYBGH>, 9 July 2013.

³⁴⁴ Interview with János Martonyi, ‘Global Opening in Hungarian Foreign Politics’, 9 September 2011, at <<http://www.kormany.hu/hu/kulugyminiszterium/a-miniszter/beszedekek-publikaciok-interjuk/global-opening-in-hungarian-foreign-politics>>, 9 July 2013.

³⁴⁵ A. Rácz, ‘An Unintended Consequence...’, p. 1.

“global opening” for the first sight, but obviously, with the help of proper terminology, coherent arguments and the leading political figures (prime minister and ministers) confirming each other’s thoughts from time to time. As Rácz (2011) underlines, *in Hungarian foreign policy thinking, the general term “East” (Kelet in Hungarian) lacks a widely agreed upon meaning, and as long as “there is not a single interpretation of the “Eastern”*³⁴⁶, it presents a challenge to talk about the same things in the same direction. In the next section, we provide a detailed analysis of the “Eastern doctrine”.

Turn towards the East

Hungary’s turn towards the East is not quite a coherent policy, but rather a collection of steps and gestures towards Eastern states which possess the capacity to invest in the country or to finance its debt. The ultimate interest in them has been growing, but becomes really intensive when criticism comes from European or Western financial institutions. On the following pages we are going to look into this ‘Eastern turn’, and present projects and events which have already had or will have substantial and lasting effects for Hungary’s development.

The system change in 1989-1990 and the end of the Cold War were followed by an immediate replacement of the former Eastern connections by Western relations, causing a dramatic change first of all in export markets: as shown earlier, the step was imminent, lacked any organic evolution and left Hungary without Eastern export markets and cooperation. The only remaining tie was the “new Russia”, but only because of energy imports, and therefore, Moscow continued to be an important partner for Hungary in this sense.

At that time, and by the early 2000s, *Western European financial experts were praising Hungary, labeling it as the economic front-runner of Central Europe, for its huge efforts to comply with EU regulations and difficult economic tasks.*³⁴⁷ Its route was paved to the European Community and even if the process itself proved to be successful, in a bit more than a decade Hungary lost its advantageous position in the region. The economic difficulties of the country are clear since the first years of the new Millennium, and the EU membership has been unable to solve the problems – or better to say, it has generated even new ones, for example, in the sector of agriculture, where traditional Hungarian actors met fierce competing Western counterparts, and lost. The socialist–free democrat coalition government agreed a package deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2008 – a rescue credit line of 20 billion Euros – although its effect was predicted to be miserable: the

³⁴⁶ Idem, ‘A Limited Priority...’, p. 145.

³⁴⁷ A. A. Nemeth, ‘The Country Where Growth Stopped’, *The European Strategist*, 24 June 2011, at <<http://www.europeanstrategist.eu/2011/06/the-country-where-growth-stopped/>>, 20 August 2013.

government was unable to react upon the challenges the deal presented. The turning point arrived in 2010, after Fidesz gained power after the so-called revolutionary election, turned its back to the IMF and began to encourage foreign interests in the country from the East.

Disappointment in the EU

The turn towards Eastern partners seems to have been boosted by several factors, mainly connected to the unsuccessful European steps aiming at the recovery of the economy and the criticism arriving from other EU countries because of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's national reforms. The economic difficulties of Hungary are undoubtedly serious; the huge amount of foreign-currency debt is a big concern, and Western financial organizations and several credit-rating agencies have considered Budapest as one of the most vulnerable members of the Community. During the first year of his government, Orbán wanted to let budget deficit reach 7-8% of the GDP, and to boost the economy, but the Community was against these moves because under current rules, present and potential future Euro-zone members must keep their budget deficits below 3% of the GDP. Since then, Hungarian foreign policy met with massive EU-criticism and the country's new foreign connections manifest a determined turn towards Eastern countries. This turn, together with the internal political reforms (aiming at power centralization with occasional anti-democratic touches) are in the focus of EU critiques, which, among other things, led to the endorsement of the so-called Tavares Report by the European Parliament. MEP Rapporteur Rui Tavares constructed a report about Hungary's "constitutional revolution" which described the situation of fundamental rights, democracy, freedom, the rule of law etc.³⁴⁸ Viktor Orbán commented the adoption during a press conference after the meeting: *Drawing conclusions from the past, Hungarians do not want a Europe where successful countries are punished and placed under guardianship, large countries abuse their power, double standards are applied and only small countries have to respect the larger ones and not the other way round*, he said, adding that *the Tavares report [...] applies double standards, poses a serious danger to Europe, violates the Treaty on the European Union and arbitrarily defines criteria*.³⁴⁹ The tone of his speech was similar to general governmental communication trends about the EU, which suggest that the Union was blamed from time to time for the unsuccessful economic outcomes. In an interview with *The Economist* in 2011, Viktor Orbán agreed with the *suggestion that success in macro-economic stabilization has not been matched by progress on the micro-economic agenda: debureaucratization, labor-market reform and particularly the black economy*. He put some of the

³⁴⁸ See the report here: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?type=REPORT&reference=A7-2013-0229&language=EN>.

³⁴⁹ 'Tavares Report Called Unjust in a European Parliament Debate Today in Strasbourg', Prime Minister's Office, 2 July 2013, at <<http://www.kormany.hu/en/prime-minister-s-office/news/tavares-report-called-unjust-in-a-european-parliament-debate-today-in-strasbourg>>, 2 August 2013.

*blame on the European Union, both for low growth and for failing to disburse structural funds more quickly.*³⁵⁰ The reporter quickly noted that *other countries are growing a lot faster than Hungary*³⁵¹ with the same conditions, under the same circumstances. But blaming an entity, blaming the bureaucracy far from our borders, the well-known “Brussels wants us to” phrase just fits perfectly in this foreign policy, where everything has been shaken up. Former supporters of the Free Tibet Movement decided to silence these activists in themselves³⁵², who were once critics of Moscow and Vladimir Putin’s embarrassingly anti-democratic use of power now seems to follow the “Russian way”. Time has changed, says Orbán, and criticizes the way Western democracies work, bringing Eastern countries such as China or Russia as an example. *To stay competitive, he argues, democracies have to adapt. They have to be less debt-dependent: debt creates weaknesses and hampers decision-making. They have to pay more attention to manufacturing, and to providing decent jobs for manual workers. [...] That led on to the question of whether something is fundamentally wrong with the way that western democracies make decisions. Mr Orbán has no truck with that, Russian, Chinese and Brazilian decision-making is slow too. It is just that they are doing better than the old West right now*³⁵³, Orbán thinks.

Hopes in the Chinese economy

Diplomatic and economic relations are evolving and becoming more intensive from year to year between European countries and Beijing, and the financial crisis of the Community just accelerated these events. All member states try to secure an outstanding place in the framework of cooperation with Beijing, so does Budapest as well. And even if Europeans have become much more critical of China according to some surveys³⁵⁴ and the EU has serious concerns about the human rights situation in Beijing, the race for China and for Chinese investments has started.³⁵⁵ As a new trend, China seeks bilateral connections with each country in the community and the European countries seek connections on their own – naturally based upon their national interests – instead of forming a single

³⁵⁰ ‘Orbán and the Wind from the East’, *The Economist*, 14 November 2011, at <<http://www.economist.com/blogs/easternapproaches/2011/11/hungarys-politics>>, 2 August 2013.

³⁵¹ Ibid.

³⁵² Young democratic activist Orbán organised a public protest against the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989. In 2000, during his first term as prime minister, he even had a meeting with the Dalai Lama in Budapest. See more: D. Kálan, ‘Relationship of a Special Significance? A Chinese Direction in Hungary’s Foreign Policy under Viktor Orbán’, *Croatian International Relations Review*, Vol. 18, No. 66 (2012), p. 63.

³⁵³ ‘Orbán and the Wind...’

³⁵⁴ See, for instance: <http://www.pewglobal.org/2007/06/27/chapter-3-views-of-china-and-its-increasing-influence/>.

³⁵⁵ The Asian giant has now overtaken the United States as the greatest perceived threat to global stability in the eyes of Europeans, according to the opinion poll commissioned by the Financial Times. The poll, carried out by the Harris agency [in 2008] found that 35 percent of respondents in the five largest EU states see China as a bigger threat to world stability than any other state. See in: J. Wolf, ‘Europeans View China as Biggest Threat to Global Security’, *Atlantic Review*, 16 April 2008, at <<http://atlanticreview.org/archives/1058-Europeans-View-China-as-Biggest-Threat-to-Global-Security.html>>, 4 August 2013.

EU strategy for international relations.³⁵⁶ Beijing appears not only as an investor, but also as a lender and savior, an economic partner that could help find a way out of the crisis.

It is useless to compare Budapest to the Western countries of the Community, but in its closer vicinity, Hungary is competitive. If we focus specifically on investments or trade relations, Hungary plays a prominent role in the region's relations with China. The country plays a particularly important role in China's foreign policy, as it is not only the most popular regional destination for Chinese immigrants, but also Hungary is the only country that has a Bank of China branch in the region. What is more, there is a Hungarian-Chinese bilingual elementary school since the fall of 2004.

Hungary has been establishing itself as a regional partner of China for years now and the second Orbán government's foreign policy openly declared its turn towards China – continuing and obviously extending bilateral relations *previously enacted by the left-wing governments headed by Péter Medgyessy (2002-04), Ferenc Gyurcsány (2004-09), and Gordon Bajnai (2009-10)*.³⁵⁷ The visit of Wen Jiabao in the summer of 2011 seemed to mean an advantage for Hungary, compared to other countries in the region. The Chinese Prime Minister and Viktor Orbán signed twelve agreements, including a one-billion-euro extra credit or potential infrastructure investments. During this visit there was a shocking step of the Hungarian government against the protesters of Free Tibet movement: although Orbán stated that they *did not lock up anybody*, the demonstrations were banned and local Tibetans summoned to attend the government immigration offices on that day.³⁵⁸ As Orbán noted in another interview in *The Economist*, *the government has the right to stop demonstrations that disrupt diplomatic relations. The Hungarian state has the right to pursue foreign policy in the national interest*. Additionally, the reporter added: *Perhaps, but other countries do allow protests within sight of visiting foreign delegations, including those such as the Chinese whose feelings are famously prone to injury. His didn't*.³⁵⁹

But Hungary's so-called leadership in the region is very fragile, and many countries are willing to offer the Asian country immediate and full partnership; for example, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland or Romania – all of them are ready to act in this way. Clearly, *China sees the Central European countries as a gateway to the European Union. [...] Hungary would [definitely] like to become a hub for the Chinese economic presence in the region*.³⁶⁰

³⁵⁶ I. Tarrósy, Z. Vörös, 'An Overview of EU-China Relations: From the Race for Energy Security to the Development of Soft Power and Public Diplomacy' in Sz. Pudruzsik, S. Kerekes (eds.), *China-EU Cooperation for a Sustainable Economy*, Budapest 2012, pp. 201-218; A. Inotai, *Kína világgazdasági szerepének erősödése. Az exportorientált "modell" jövője*, Budapest 2010, p. 206.

³⁵⁷ D. Kałan, 'Relationship of a Special Significance?...', p. 61.

³⁵⁸ 'Orbán and the Wind...'

³⁵⁹ Ibid.

³⁶⁰ T. Matura, 'Sino-Hungarian Relations in 2010', *HIIA Papers*, No. 8 (2011), p. 7.

All in all, economic connections with China could be beneficial for Hungary, but praising the “Chinese way of democracy” over that of what the European Union fosters is dangerous, together with the emphasis put on manufacturing based on Chinese labour market produces illogical outcomes, especially when the education sector gets less and less attention and money in Hungary from year to year.

Russian way of democracy – The power of energy

One of the major tasks of Hungarian diplomacy is *to support projects leading to increased security of [energy] supply*.³⁶¹ In general terms, energy security is *the issue that has lately produced the most spectacular flicker of revival of Visegrád cooperation as a consequence of the gas crises in 2006 and 2009*.³⁶² This is certainly in line with the efforts of the European Union, which has a strong interest to bring security in the entire European Energy System. From this perspective, the EU *is seeking a balanced energy partnership with Russia and is pushing for the renewal of a wide-ranging Partnership and Cooperation Agreement*.³⁶³

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Russia remained an important partner for Hungary mainly because of energy trade – although Moscow has always played a decisive role in Hungarian politics. As a “shadow” of the former socialist era and the attitude of the actual government towards Russia and deeper energy-cooperation with them could always easily generate arguments among the political actors, and thus set the agenda several times. The actual energy needs of Europe have a major influence on Hungary as well, and because the Union was unable to conceive a single strategy, Budapest decided – as a right choice – to join both pipeline projects, the Nabucco, supported by the EU, and the South Stream, designed by Russia. While in opposition, Fidesz argued against the Russian project³⁶⁴, but since they are in government, they have strongly stood for the South Stream.³⁶⁵ Based on this, it is clear how Moscow can influence the foreign policy of Budapest, and the substantial change of the previously anti-Russian Fidesz is clearly visible and shows the obvious adjustment of the party’s foreign strategy. As the Economist noted, *in opposition, the party was a stern critic of the ex-KGB regime in Moscow, berating it for neo-imperialism and shenanigans on energy security, and*

³⁶¹ ‘Hungary’s Foreign Policy after the Hungarian Presidency...’, p. 12.

³⁶² A. Sobják, ‘Rethinking the Future of the Visegrad Group at a Time of Heated Debate on the Future of the EU’, *The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (2012), p. 130.

³⁶³ S. Boneva, ‘Enhancing Energy Efficiency in the European Union: A Challenge for the Next Decade’ in I. Tarrósy, S. Milford (eds.), *Challenges for the European Union in the Next Decade. A View from the Danube Region*, Pécs 2013, p. 89.

³⁶⁴ ‘Fügesszék fel a Déli Áramlat munkálatainak előkészítését’, Fidesz, 13 July 2009, at <<http://www.fidesz.hu/index.php?Cikk=136262>>, 30 July 2013.

³⁶⁵ ‘A Fidesz határozottan a Déli áramlat mellett’, NOL, 16 September 2011, at <http://nol.hu/gazdasag/a_fidesz_hatarozottan_a_deli_aramlat_mellett?ref=sso>, 30 July 2013.

*complaining about Western weak-kneedness towards the threat from the east. Now the tone is rather different.*³⁶⁶ Although some analysts noted that the relationship is not the best between the two sides³⁶⁷, the agreements that have been signed in Moscow are enormous – but the details are still undisclosed. As the government website informs us, *it is in Hungary's fundamental interest to pursue good relations and close cooperation with Russia, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán said when he met President Vladimir Putin [...]. The Prime Minister stressed Russia's importance and apart from its economic power, he also praised the richness of Russian culture. He pointed out that Hungary has always regarded Russia as a great nation with a great future. Therefore, Hungary would like to encourage Russian investments as well as maintain bilateral cooperation on energy, and it relies on Russia's "excellent professional credentials and world-ranking technology."*³⁶⁸ The business weekly HVG had an insider information that Russia could subscribe 4.6 billion dollars of Hungarian government bonds at an interest rate of 2.25 percent.³⁶⁹ The government quickly denied this information but the growing reality of the enlargement of the Nuclear Power Plant in the town of Paks, and Russia as the investor – even in the form of lending to the Hungarian government up to 10 billion euros to build the two new reactors (again with Russia as partner) as a result of the bilateral deal signed by President Putin and Prime Minister Orbán on 14 January 2014³⁷⁰ – in the project certainly proves deepening connections.

To sum up, Russia is one of the strategically important key countries of the so-called “opening towards the East” policy. The Hungarian government has the definite aim to intensify bilateral cooperation, and as the Foreign Minister of Hungary János Martonyi pointed out, *the Government intended to settle all outstanding economic issues at the earliest opportunity. The most important tasks include the drafting of a new version of the long-term gas supply agreement that is to expire in 2015 and to settle the outstanding claims on both sides following the bankruptcy of Malév to the satisfaction of both parties. He added that it is also important to settle the case of Dunafer in a satisfactory*

³⁶⁶ ‘Orbán and the Wind...’

³⁶⁷ See: ‘An Analysis of Russian-Hungarian Relations in Perspective’, *Hungarian Spectrum*, 2 February 2013, at <<http://hungarianspectrum.wordpress.com/2013/02/02/an-analysis-of-russian-hungarian-relations-in-perspective/>>, 8 August 2013. It is worth quoting a longer passage from the original text: *Viktor Orbán is in a difficult position when it comes to friendly relations with Russia because of the heavy political baggage he carries from his days in opposition. In those days he made irresponsible comments about Russia. Despite Vladimir Putin's warm welcome, there is a great deal of dissatisfaction with the Orbán government's Russia policy. Putin's Russia doesn't hide its true feelings toward Viktor Orbán, which in this case translated into a short audience, no scheduled press conference, and no lunch or dinner after the official appointment. In November 2010 when Viktor Orbán first visited Russia as prime minister these niceties were planned, but in the end they were dispensed with. By contrast, each time Péter Medgyessy or Ferenc Gyurcsány paid a visit to Moscow there was always a press conference and a dinner meeting. Russia has reason to be dissatisfied with trade relations and mutual investments between the two countries. In the last three years the rate of investment has slowed. To quote from Putin's welcoming speech: "Until recently, the level of investment between the two countries was well balanced. However, for the last three years it hasn't grown or has grown very slowly."*

³⁶⁸ ‘Agreement on Energy Cooperation’, Prime Minister's Office, 31 January 2013, at <<http://www.kormany.hu/en/prime-minister-s-office/news/agreement-on-energy-cooperation>>, 8 August 2013.

³⁶⁹ ‘Orbán 4,6 milliárd dollárért cserélte Moszkvára az IMF-et’, *HVG*, 6 February 2013, at <http://hvg.hu/gazdasag/20130206_HVG_Orban_46_milliard_dollarert_cserelte>, 8 August 2013.

³⁷⁰ ‘Russia to Increase Hungary's Nuclear Power’, Reuters, 14 January 2014, at <<http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/01/14/russia-hungary-idUSL6N0KO28L20140114>>, 13 March 2014.

manner.³⁷¹ As far as the flights between the two countries are considered, Hungary-based Wizz Air, the biggest low-cost airline in the region launched a Budapest-Moscow flight 5 times a week in August 2013 and also started to analyse the possibility of the Saint Petersburg destination. As undersecretary Péter Szijjártó noted, this is the success of the new policy of the government.³⁷² After periods of changing relations – to use Póti's typology (2006) – between 1990 and 2004 of *divorce with the Soviet Union (1990-1991)*; *peaceful co-existence (1992-1994)*; *normalisation (1994-1998)*; *distancing (1998-2002)*; *normalisation again (2002-2004)*³⁷³ – a potential new rapprochement can be hoped for following the very logical steps of recent times. For both actors a well-functioning bilateral set of collaborative projects is of mutual interest.

The Middle East connection

Another priority region of Hungary's global opening covers the countries of the Middle East, especially those with abundant financial resources to invest, as both potential short-term and long-term partners for Hungary. Viktor Orbán travelled to Saudi Arabia in 2011 to discuss political and economic cooperation between the two countries. Apart from the Prime Minister's delegation, since the beginning of the new Fidesz-led era several other missions have visited the Arab World, either on behalf of the government or the City of Budapest, and tried to negotiate economic investment projects in Hungary.

Among the first (seemingly) successful projects one can list the new "national" airline company, the so-called Sólyom [Falcon] Company – the investors of the company are from the Arab world, still unknown, but information about them is scarce. One source about them indicated that they were the owners of the Emirates Airlines, one of the biggest airline companies of the world. Although this was announced, the confidence of the management is pointing into such direction.³⁷⁴ As for their expectations, the Sólyom planned to launch a deal with a leasing company for six aircrafts, the first Boeing 737-500 to be delivered on 18 August. That is when the airline started its operation. *The carrier expects to run a fleet of 50 aircrafts by 2017, 20 of which should be regional, 20 narrow-body and 10 wide-body aircraft.*³⁷⁵ The plans are grandiose, but with a big investor in the background, it

³⁷¹ 'János Martonyi: Russia Is One of the Key Countries in "Eastern Opening" policy', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1 March 2013, at <<http://www.kormany.hu/en/ministry-of-foreign-affairs/news/janos-martonyi-russia-is-one-of-the-key-countries-in-eastern-opening-policy>>, 8 August 2013.

³⁷² 'Moszkvai járatot indít a Wizz Air', index.hu, 19 July 2013, at <http://index.hu/gazdasag/2013/07/19/moszkvai_jaratot_indit_a_wizz_air/>, 8 August 2013.

³⁷³ L. Póti, 'Hungarian Foreign Policy and ENP in the East: Energy- (and) Nationality-based Policy', *International Issues & Slovak Foreign Policy Affairs*, Vol. 15, No. 3-4 (2006), p. 66.

³⁷⁴ 'Az Emirates állhat a Sólyom mögött', Gazdasági Rádió, 31 July 2013, at <<http://gazdasagradio.hu/cikk/94158/>>, 8 August 2013.

³⁷⁵ 'Emirates Airlines Tipped as Mysterious Investor behind Hungary's New Carrier Sólyom', portfolio.hu, 31 July 2013, at

might work – if the previous news is true. However, the weekly HVG refuted the info based on the spokesman of the Emirates. The website noted that they are not interested in the region.³⁷⁶ As of May 2014, the official website of Solyom Hungarian Airways (see: <http://www.solyom.org>) informs its potential customers that routes are still not scheduled, just “most likely” will be flown.

The Caucasus in brief

The countries in the Caucasus, especially Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan are also in the focus of the new policy, in particular, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan with their *significant gas and oil deposits even by international comparison*.³⁷⁷ So far, however, the only thing Budapest could achieve was an international scandal, the Ramil Safarov-case. In brief, Ramil Safarov killed an Armenian man with an axe in Hungary during a NATO program in 2004 and was imprisoned in Budapest until August 2012.³⁷⁸ Then, he got extradited to Azerbaijan. He was expected to serve the rest of his life sentence in Azerbaijan, but well before his arrival, it was obvious that he would be promoted instead, and that is exactly what finally happened. Armenia formally suspended ties with Hungary and accused the country of a secret deal with Azerbaijan.

Since then, the ties between Baku and Budapest have become warmer; the Hungarian Post even designed a commemorative stamp. It was a tribute to Heydar Aliyev's 90th birth anniversary. Moreover, an Azerbaijan Park is in the planning phase to be built in Budapest.

Besides energy-focused relations, Hungary emphasizes in its strategic document on foreign policy that she is *ready to share with the states of [Central Asia] its experiences, gained in the course of democratic transformation, in promoting human rights and cultural diversity*, especially due to the fact that *Hungary enjoys a good reputation and a certain degree of social capital through personal contacts dating back to the Soviet times, while a special element of [the] relationship is an awareness of common origins*³⁷⁹, the argumentation reads.

<http://www.portfolio.hu/en/economy/emirates_airlines_tipped_as_mysterious_investor_behind_hungarys_new_carrier_solyom.26430.html, 20 August 2013>.

³⁷⁶ ‘Az Emirates biztosan nem áll a Solyom mögött’, HVG, 31 July 2013, at <http://hvg.hu/gazdasag/20130731_Az_Emirates_biztos_nem_all_a_Solyom_mogot#rss>, 20 August 2013.

³⁷⁷ ‘Hungary's Foreign Policy after the Hungarian Presidency...’, p. 41.

³⁷⁸ Background of the conflict: Azerbaijan and Armenia are in a bloody conflict over the disputed border territory of Nagorno-Karabakh for more than two decades. See more of the case: ‘Azeri Killer Ramil Safarov: Nato Chief “concerned”’, BBC News Europe, 6 September 2012, at <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-19499151>>, 22 August 2013.

³⁷⁹ ‘Hungary's Foreign Policy after the Hungarian Presidency...’, p. 41.

Africa is not that distant, is it?³⁸⁰

It may feel surprising, but Hungary also wishes to formulate its “own” Africa policy – as one can be assured when reading the policy document of global opening.³⁸¹ Good reputation and a wide network of personal contacts in many countries of Africa can certainly contribute to successful implementation, if the approach goes further beyond official government rhetoric. Hundreds of young Africans arrived in Hungary during the 1960s, ‘70s and ‘80s with scholarships from the Hungarian state, who represent *an unbreakable link between our country and the continent*³⁸², according to the introductory text of the Budapest Africa Forum held between 6 and 7 June 2013, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), predecessor of the African Union (AU). These individuals – who, as Hungarian graduates with partial Hungarian identities, or at least with the feeling of attachment to their former alma maters and Hungarian culture, also bearing the knowledge of the local language – can function as “ambassadors” to foster bilateral ties. “There is much to be done”, however, as the academic and NGO circles have been advocating for many years so that such potential commitments are channeled into concrete achievements for the benefit of both sides.

In addition to aspiring for *stronger interstate relations with the Sub-Saharan and Sahel regions*³⁸³, connecting to Africa via the EU’s Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and through its own new policy, Hungary’s priority for Africa is *to closely follow humanitarian issues, including food aid, along with agricultural, environmental, water-management and health issues, and to assess the needs for sharing our experiences related to democratic transition*.³⁸⁴

Taking a closer look at the “Africa-content” of different development, aid, or business-related policies, we feel that Africa is still in a marginal position. How Hungarian aspirations can be achieved better and with more success depends on whether or not the “African thread” can become a real foreign policy goal, which is sufficiently represented both in the government and abroad. A quick multi-country comparison in Hungary’s closest neighbourhood can show, however, that the present setting cannot support the new policy: Poland maintains five embassies in Sub-Saharan Africa (in Angola, Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, the Republic of South Africa), the Czech Republic seven (Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, the democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, the republic of South Africa, Zimbabwe), Slovakia four (Ethiopia, Kenya, Nigeria, the Republic of South Africa), and Hungary only three (in Kenya and the Republic of South Africa, together with the one in Nigeria, which was first

³⁸⁰ This section is based upon: I. Tarrósy and P. Morenth, ‘Global Opening for Hungary – New Beginning for Hungarian Africa Policy’, *African Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 14, No. 1-2 (2013), pp. 77-96 (in print).

³⁸¹ ‘Hungary’s Foreign Policy after the Hungarian Presidency...’, the chapter on Sub-Saharan Africa and the Sahel runs pp. 47-49.

³⁸² See: <http://budapestafricaforum.kormany.hu/hungary-and-africa>.

³⁸³ ‘Hungary’s Foreign Policy after the Hungarian Presidency...’, p. 48.

³⁸⁴ Ibid., pp. 48-49.

closed in 2010, then reopened in 2013).³⁸⁵ On their own, diplomatic missions are not enough for a successful policy implementation, but they are undoubtedly vital to build trust across local societies, business circles, or decision-makers. The policy of global opening has a definite answer to this by admitting that *Hungary needs to review how to address the problems arising from the short-comings of our network of representations in Sub-Saharan countries*, and underlining that *it would be pertinent to consider the (re)opening of at least two embassies, one in West Africa and the other one at the headquarters of the African Union, in Addis Ababa*.³⁸⁶

Hungary has a positive image in numerous African countries from two angles: first, it did not take part in Africa's exploitation as a colonial power, second, with many of its former products, such as the Ikarus buses or Hajdu washing machines, and even the Elzett locks and the streamlined Diesel rail cars of the Ganz company can hold extra credits for refining and redefining relations. A good combination of utilizing "nostalgic" feelings of both university studies and products, the resident African diaspora in Hungary representing many nations, together with a strengthened and extended network of diplomatic representations as part of a coherent and consistent government policy contributes to success in the long run. All these, however, need to be coupled with direct and immediate commitments (as in the case of the Libyan crisis) as a EU and NATO member state.

Hungary has several direct serious security policy and geopolitical concerns and interests, as far as migration, peacekeeping or NATO duties are taken into account. In the spring of 2013 the Hungarian government took part in the French-led military operation "Serval" in Mali with experts from the Hungarian Armed Forces.³⁸⁷ For the economic and political refugees of Sub-Saharan Africa, Hungary is a potential target-country. Organized crime, international terrorism, AIDS and tropical diseases can all reach Hungary, too. Therefore, to contribute effectively to the stability of the region and to reduce poverty in the long run is Hungary's best interest, while at the same time, presents a crucial moral obligation for the country.

Hungary's global opening on the African continent fosters the extension of cooperation in Southern Africa, which is a logical step as the Republic of South Africa is the country's most important commercial partner in the entire continent. After Europe and the USA, China and the United Arab Emirates, it is South Africa that has increased its exports and has become Hungary's fourth largest market, intensified its business activities, and strengthened its cultural and diplomatic presence in Hungary. South Africa defined a regional approach in its foreign policy toward Central Europe, and

³⁸⁵ See: D. Kopinski, 'Visegrád Countries' Development Aid to Africa: Beyond the Rhetoric', *Perspectives on European Politics and Society*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (2012), pp. 33-49, at <<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/15705854.2011.649172>>; 'Hungary Reopened its Embassy in Abuja', Prime Minister's Office, at <<http://www.kormany.hu/en/prime-minister-s-office/news/hungary-reopened-its-embassy-in-abuja>>, 14 April 2014.

³⁸⁶ 'Hungary's Foreign Policy after the Hungarian Presidency...', p. 48.

³⁸⁷ See: 'Magyarok Maliban: megjelent a kormányhatározat', *HVG*, 8 March 2013, at <http://hvg.hu/itthon/20130308_Magyarok_Maliban_megjelent_a_kormanyhatar>, 22 August 2013.

has been encouraging South African businesses to invest in more countries of the Visegrád area, for example. In this respect, SABMiller can present a success story with investments in the beer industry all across Central Europe.³⁸⁸ Is there any sense to foster cooperation among the Visegrád states, therefore, or competing for better business and investment deals is more important for individual national interests? Our final section will look at how Hungary thinks about Central Europe and its Visegrád allies in its new policy of global opening.

Changing Visegrád relations – A more coherent regional community?

József Antall, the initiator of the Visegrád Group Cooperation, Hungary's first prime minister after the change of the political system, was determined about his country's place and ultimate role in its region. On 22 May 1990, in an address to the National Assembly in Budapest he presented a straightforward plan on behalf of his government, underlining that *pan-European cooperation is accompanied by intensive regional cooperation*, and he assured the parliament that Hungary *will seek to foster it with all its neighbors*.³⁸⁹ This thesis has been a cornerstone of Hungary's foreign policy ever since, and therefore it is not surprising that the country's *primary intention is to further strengthen the regional policy, and to enhance a global opening*.³⁹⁰

As the official foreign policy document states, the Visegrád countries *boast similar living conditions, thanks to which economic ties between these countries – especially since our joint accession to the EU – have started to develop dynamically, and now feature prominently in each other's external economic ties*.³⁹¹ It also admits that major developments are crucial in the sectors of transport and energy infrastructure to serve further expansion in economic cooperation. As for the political dimension, in addition to the management of the minority issue (in particular, the Hungarian communities all across the region), to be able to enhance *common positions at the European negotiating table*³⁹², alliance-building and frequent consultations are necessary for all the members of the group. At the same time, it is vital to understand the different roles the Visegrád countries can imagine for themselves – as long as this may influence the facility of formulating common positions, or just the opposite, the difficulty of representing a common aim. Péter Marton (2012) neatly elaborates on the “sources of Visegrád conduct” in foreign policy-making, and in his comparative

³⁸⁸ See more of the company's European presence at: <http://www.sabmiller.com/index.asp?pageid=833>.

³⁸⁹ J. Antall, Parlamenti beszéd, '5. ülésnap', 22 May 1990, at <http://www.antalljozsef.hu/hu/5__ulesnap>, 23 August 2013.

³⁹⁰ Interview with János Martonyi, 'Global Opening...'

³⁹¹ 'Hungary's Foreign Policy after the Hungarian Presidency...', p. 21.

³⁹² A. Sobják, 'Rethinking the Future of the Visegrad Group...', p. 122.

analysis draws our attention to the *similarities [that] may be discovered in the uncertainty and fluidity of their role conceptions*³⁹³, which for the coming years need careful attention on the level of each government.

The future of group dynamics depends on the interest of the participating states, whether or not all of them want to establish closer cooperation as an intra-regional formation within the European Union. They have *a natural overlap of their immediate foreign policy interest zones: the Western Balkans and the Eastern Partnership states*, and they are also *vulnerable to internal divisions as a result of divergent positions towards the most significant players in the international arena, that is, the US, China, and [Russia]*.³⁹⁴ Although there are unanimous success stories for the members, for instance, in the field of civil society, cultural and academic projects funded by the International Visegrád Fund (IVF), as Anita Sobják (2012) notes, *divisions are deep as far as positions in shaping the future of the European Union are concerned*, therefore, *expectations from the Visegrád Group should not be too high, but rather remain within the horizons of what can be deemed realistic*.³⁹⁵ The IVF has been a commitment, which is taken seriously by all the members of the group, and can provide a good ground for further “expansion of thought” to support regional cohesion. The numerous grass-roots initiatives can reach out to the public at large, as well as include key decision-makers, together with lobby groups, think tanks, academics who all can contribute to “more Visegrád” within the Community. This can then reflect Foreign Minister Martonyi’s thinking about the interest of Central Europe, *that the countries of the region do not compete with each other but that their interests are jointly represented towards the other regions*.³⁹⁶ However, before noticing the promising steps of Hungary towards a deeper and more committed regional cooperation, we have to add that despite the grandiose comments and official documents, the participants of the Visegrád Cooperation have let each other down, or had been played out against each other by Western states several times, not to mention the Agricultural Agreements of the EU accession negotiations or as it happened in the case of the Climate Quotas. For a healthy cooperation, each of the members needs to recognize the fundamental importance of such a forum, especially in an ever-forming Community, where such a regional platform could be more successful in supporting of several common interests. In a “multi-speed” EU such cooperation can really find its momentum.

As for the recent situation, right after his oath of his second government³⁹⁷ in 2010, Prime Minister Orbán Viktor’s first official visit was paid to Warsaw. The gesture was exceptionally special,

³⁹³ P. Marton, ‘The Sources of Visegrád Conduct: A Comparative Analysis of V4 Foreign Policy-making’, *The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs*, Vol. 21, No. 4 (2012), p. 12.

³⁹⁴ A. Sobják, ‘Rethinking the Future of the Visegrád Group...’, p. 124.

³⁹⁵ Ibid., pp. 138-139.

³⁹⁶ Interview with János Martonyi, ‘Global Opening...’

³⁹⁷ On 6 April 2014, the Fidesz-Christian Democrats (KDNP) coalition led by Viktor Orbán won the national elections and could form yet another government again with a two-thirds majority backing in the parliament. See

as this was the first time for a Hungarian Prime Minister to launch his foreign diplomatic routes in a regional country (not counting Austria in this context), also symbolizing the new connections between Poland and Hungary, emerging from the ideological bases of the governing parties and from the connections of the past.

2013 was a special year for Hungary with the opportune moment to enhance Central European cooperation. The country served as president of both the V4 Cooperation and the Central European Initiative. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs showed commitment to curve the main focus of the year along the lines of *eliminating the possible obstacles to Central European cooperation, representing the region's common goal within the European Union and to further the Central European participation of countries outside Europe*, therefore, emphasis was laid on *enhancing the international organizations' transparency, as well as aiding economic development and facilitating mobility*.³⁹⁸ The Hungarian government supported the concept of a *stronger Europe* with a *vision of a stronger Central Europe within the EU* to be able to *improve regional accessibility and the development of physical and human infrastructure [...] in order to increase the region's competitiveness*.³⁹⁹

Conclusion

*To adapt our foreign policy to the new realities across the world*⁴⁰⁰ is now the new mantra for Hungarian foreign-policy makers. There is an apparent change and adaptation in governmental communication which manifest that Hungary feels she has duties, but at the same time opportunities in different parts of the interconnected world, even in seemingly faraway regions of Asia, Latin America or sub-Saharan Africa. Hungary's declared "value-based foreign policy" wants to fulfill its central aims from two angles: to pursue the strategic goals of the European Union as one of its members states, and to advance its national interests *in all aspects that go beyond Hungary's borders*.⁴⁰¹

Our paper has shown that the future of Hungary is still a future with an EU-membership status – but recent tendencies are showing a growing interest towards the East, towards Eastern investments.

more, for instance: 'Hungary Election: PM Viktor Orban Declares Victory', BBC News Europe, at <<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-26908404>>, 7 April 2014.

³⁹⁸ '2013 Central European Year in Hungarian Diplomacy', Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 28 December 2012, at <<http://www.kormany.hu/en/ministry-of-foreign-affairs/news/2013-central-european-year-in-hungarian-diplomacy>>, 25 August 2013.

³⁹⁹ P. Rada, 'The "Central European" Year of Hungarian Foreign Policy', CEPA, 2 April 2013, at <<http://www.cepa.org/content/central-european-year-hungarian-foreign-policy>>, 20 August 2013.

⁴⁰⁰ Quoting Szabolcs Takács in 'Strategic Cooperation and Diverse Relationship', *Diplomacy & Trade*, 31 January 2013, at <<http://www.dteurope.com/diplomacy/news/strategic-cooperation-and-diverse-relationship.html>>, 9 July 2013.

⁴⁰¹ 'Hungary's Foreign Policy after the Hungarian Presidency...', p. 3.

This government policy, however, has another side as well: to secure new export markets for Hungarian companies and their trademarks which can become new actors in other competing spheres beyond the European realm. In this context, this policy is more of a “turning back” to the foreign policy of the socialist era with its peculiar “turning towards Eastern countries” objective, building upon the memories of products of the country still familiar to the public at large. We can easily notice the government’s unique step to refinance its huge debt: Hungary offers 5-year-long residence permits for those foreigners who buy 250,000-euro government bonds. Naturally, with this permit a given foreigner is allowed to enter the EU without any proper control – not the most proper step toward building trust among EU countries, and hardly the best tool to foster investments.

Strategic planning, however, is welcome in the administration and in civil society, as long as resources are also made available in a coherent manner. This is to be done systematically in the forthcoming years, with the enhanced involvement of different stakeholders interested in the implementation of what the government aspires for in terms of increased cooperation with different parts of the world. Recent developments in the affairs of the western Mediterranean region, for example, may also underline how timely Poland’s initiative is, seeking *to create a vision for the European Commission and the European Parliament and for coordinating the foreign policies of the EU member states*.⁴⁰² The “European Global Strategy” can strengthen the *outstanding role of the Visegrád Four in bridging the widening gap between the European Union and its neighboring countries*.⁴⁰³ Therefore, Hungary’s policy towards the East can make even more sense, supposing that in the closer geographical vicinity of the country, together with its V4 allies, she can truly redefine and enhance Central European cooperation. Hungary’s attempts to re-position itself in an interpolar world, and thus to re-orientate its foreign policy according to the new dynamics and opportunities to seek for more financial stability back at home at the same time are certainly formulated at the right time. By the end of the second decade of the twenty-first century we will be able to examine how successful this policy of global opening will have been, and whether or not Hungary will have joined forces with its regional allies in the most relevant way to *assume a more prominent position with the Visegrád Group at the European negotiating table*.⁴⁰⁴

⁴⁰² R. Parkes, A. Sobják, ‘This Is How the Visegrád Four Can Benefit from a Global Strategy’, *Népszabadság*, 17 June 2013, at <http://www.budapesttelegraph.com/news/392/this_is_how_the_visegrad_four_can_benefit_from_a_global_strategy>, 28 August 2013.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

⁴⁰⁴ Ibid.

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The economic transformation in Hungary – detour or impasse?⁴⁰⁵

Abstract

The economic transition took place in the Central and Eastern European region almost at the same time. The reasons and the process of economic transition are similar. However, the Hungarian case had a special importance in the change of the regime, as it was followed by a political transformation. The New Economic Mechanism from 1968 brought irreversible changes in macroeconomy and in the attitude towards entrepreneurship. The reforms were stopped because of several reasons. However, the spirit survived. While focusing on the transformation, it is also essential to examine the historical and political background of Hungary to answer the question whether the socialist economy can be considered a “detour” or “impasse”. Using the different statistical data about the Hungarian convergency towards the developed Western European region, it can be said that the relative backwardness is rooted in the historical past and apart from the fact that several efforts were carried out in order to reduce or at least to stop the growing differences, these attempts failed partly because of several inappropriate political decisions.

Keywords: economy, transformation, reforms, convergency

This war is not as in the past; whoever occupies a territory also imposes on it his own social system. Everyone imposes his own system as far as his army can reach. It cannot be otherwise. If now there is not a communist government in Paris, the cause of this is Russia has no army that can reach Paris in 1945.

Stalin's speech from April, 1945⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰⁵ The chapter appeared in P:oliteja 28, 2014 Journal of the Faculty of International and Political Studies of the Jagiellonian University

When forces that are hostile to socialism try to turn the development of some socialist country towards capitalism, it becomes not only a problem of the country concerned, but a common problem and concern of all socialist countries.

Quotation from Breznev's Doctrine, 1968⁴⁰⁷

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 opened a new historical phase for Eastern Europe. But it also marked a turning point at the heart of neo-liberal globalisation and European construction.

Catherine Samary⁴⁰⁸

Preface – the division of Europe

The aim of this paper is to describe the economic transition in Hungary within the Central and Eastern European region, its features, historical background, aims and consequences. After the Second World War, Hungary became the member of a bloc of states within the Soviet Union's sphere of influence called the socialist bloc, therefore it is reasonable to give an overview of the consequences of this group to focus to the Central and Eastern European region as a whole. According to Berend⁴⁰⁹, the transformation of Central and Eastern Europe

⁴⁰⁶ It was called the "Stalinn doctrine". *The Stalin Doctrine*, Grand Strategy: The View from Oregon, 22 January 2011, at <http://geopoliticus.wordpress.com/2011/01/22/the-stalin-doctrine/>

⁴⁰⁷ Quotation from the Brezhnev doctrine. J. Taranto, 'Leonid Brezhnev Lives', *The Wall Street Journal*, 30 March 2012, at <<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303404704577313750705052134.html>>.

⁴⁰⁸ C. Samary, East Europe faced with the crises of the system, in: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303404704577313750705052134.html>

⁴⁰⁹ T. Iván Berend is a Hungarian historian focusing on the economic history of the Central and Eastern European region in the 19th and 20th centuries. In many of his works, he explains the problems of convergence and divergence of the Central and Eastern European region to the more developed Western European states. His concise summary of the construction of the Soviet bloc can be read in: *Central and Eastern Europe, 1944-1993. Detour from the Periphery to the Periphery*, New York 1998, *Cambridge Studies in Modern Economic History*, 1.

after the half-century communist experiment is one of the most important historical events of turn-of-the-century Europe and the emerging new world order. The transformation is a complex phenomenon with far-reaching political, social, cultural and economic aspects.

When we examine the economic transformation, it is essential to concentrate on the geopolitical, historical, political and economic background as a whole. A huge amount of books and essays deals with the aspects and consequences of the division of the European continent, the gap as an effect of the iron curtain. It would be a hopeless task to list the authors and their works; however it would be reasonable to introduce at least a part of the Hungarian works focusing on the economic transition and Hungary's role within Europe and its convergence towards the developed Western European core region.

It is a part of historical legacy that the European continent cannot be considered a homogeneous entity; there are cleavages which are either cultural or economic. It is not surprising that these cleavages are located more or less at the same places.⁴¹⁰ Among others, the Wallerstein's model⁴¹¹ that characterised the triple-divided construction was accepted by the Hungarian historians as well. His construction was extended by Jenő Szűcs. According to their opinion, the gap between the more developed West and the periphery can be explained by several historical and economic factors. They both found a so-called semi-periphery which can be referred to as the Central and Eastern European region.

If we keep in mind the regional differences as a reason and at the same time the consequence, the distinctions of the European continent are essential. According to Jacobs's interpretation, Europe can be identified as a concept as well as a continent and the borders oscillate widely.⁴¹² Following this standpoint, "Europe" became virtually synonymous with Christendom in the Middle Ages. A relatively recent and generally unaccepted theory sees Europe spanning half the globe, from Iceland to Bering Strait, nearly touching Alaska. During the Cold War, however, the opposite tendency triumphed more often: All of the Soviet Union, including Vilnius, Riga and other cities that today lie within the European Union, were excluded from Europe entirely. At times even the Soviet satellite states in the Warsaw Pact

⁴¹⁰ It is very popular to deal with the division of Europe. The core and periphery theory by Wallerstein is based on the same ideology that was also described by the Hungarian historian Jenő Szűcs in his work: 'Vázlat Európa három történelmi régiójáról', *Történelmi Szemle*, No. 3 (1981), pp. 313-359. The importance of this essay – apart from the intention to write a synthesis comparing the different regions of Europe – was its delicate timing. The essay was published in the early 1980s and claimed that there was no homogenous Eastern Europe.

⁴¹¹ I. Wallerstein, *A modern világ gazdasági rendszer kialakulása. A tőkés mezőgazdaság és az európai világ gazdaság eredete a XVI. században*, Budapest 1983.

⁴¹² F. Jacobs, *Where is Europe?*, *Opiniator*, at <<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/01/09/where-is-europe/>>.

were left out as well, so much had “Europe” come to be synonymous with “the West” and its associated political values. According to Jacobs, their Europeanness of the countries of the former Eastern Bloc was confirmed with the transition and the European integration. The change of the regime brought the remapping of the European continent as the post-socialist states also expressed their claim for acknowledgment as the full members of Europe. European integration was the final proof of the fact that the borders of Europe are not equal with the line of the iron curtain, however several doubts arose in connection this issue.

The economic transformation in Central and Eastern Europe

There can be several reasons of the collapse of socialism; of why it happened, whether there were external reasons or it was a consequence of several political and economic coincidences. It can be assumed that the agony of the socialist economy was a long-lasting process. However, taking account the statistical data, we must not forget about the fact that in the first half of the 1950s, the Central and Eastern European region was the most dynamic region of the world reaching the greatest increase in the annual national product. There were times when the West did not feel totally assured about its superior economic and military force and communist brush fire in poor parts of the world was feared. The whole region followed the same scenario as the Soviet view of communism was the prescribed model everywhere in the Soviet bloc and only a limited level of divergence was accepted. This perception underwent a remarkable change after the 1956 events in Poland and the collapse of revolution and war of independence in Hungary. Strict elements of Stalinism disappeared and never returned, however it did not mean a dynamic change in the socialist world, only moderate changes were recognisable. In case of Poland, farming largely remained in private hands and dissidents met with more tolerance than in other East European countries. Hungary was also allowed to embark on a more relaxed economic policy which included incentives for workers and greater freedom for middle management in agriculture and industry. Thanks to the higher level of consumption, it also became the most individualist society of Europe. But when Czechoslovakia seemed to be heading towards the dismantling of single-party rule in 1968 and to the espousal of other “bourgeois democratic” heresies, Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops marched in and restored communist order. A month later, the so-called Brezhnev doctrine

described precisely the limits of the divergence within the socialist world however it concentrated mostly on the political issue neglecting the economic issue.

It was pointless to speak about the socialist region as politically homogeneous, but economic and social differences particularly emerged right in the late 1940s. According to several views, the reason of the collapse of communism can also be explained by this unequal heritage and development. Communism failed because it was based on a model, in some sense inappropriate, or the particular Soviet incarnation was at fault. The model served not too badly in special circumstances, such as the economic take-off in the terminology of Rostow, but it failed hopelessly in a mature economy. It was widely recognisable in the case of Czechoslovakia that, thanks to its historical and geographical background, it can be characterised as the most industrialised and most urbanised state within the Communist bloc. That is a special question whether enforced industrialisation had such painful consequences as the decline of the standards of living, the fall of real wages, fall of consumption that could lead to the political opposition against Soviet Union after the death of Stalin. The features of communist rule were inherited from the tsarist Russia; the centralisation of power and the need for ideology, the key role of the military and the imperial aspirations.

When we examine the issue of the economic transformation, the road to the change of the regime from the perspective of the transformation of economy, the historical heritage also has to be kept in mind. This division survived for centuries. The historical heritage remained in Europe in a dual structure.⁴¹³ The difference can be discerned in the following issues: nation state versus global governance, representation of the local or global interests, federalism or strong nation state. The revival of the nation state after transition was very often accompanied by strong centralisation efforts which resulted in the total absence or a weakness of the decentralised institutional system and autonomies of the region. The judgement of the events of 1989, or the transition process itself differs according to the judges. It can be described as the “*annus mirabilis*” when a great political and economic transformation appeared without violence.⁴¹⁴

⁴¹³ If we look at the difference between the East and the West, semi-periphery can refer to the East as well.

⁴¹⁴ This phenomenon appears in Kornai's and Berend's works. Berend describes 1989 as an “*annus mirabilis*” partly because of the speed of the events as almost every regime collapsed within a year, and on the other hand because of the peaceful nature of transformation. As it took part without greater violence. János Kornai, the famous Hungarian retired professor of Harvard University also uses this terminology to describe the chain of the events in 1989.

At the turn of millennium, more optimistic views became widespread according to the success or failure of the transition. The model created by Iván Szelényi⁴¹⁵ distinguished three different types of transition models from which two “belong to” the post-Socialist European states. He estimated the outer-directed capitalism as the better scenario from the two European models with the limited possibility of transition crisis and a relatively short time frame. However, the crisis that reached Europe in late 2008 showed that the deeper a country is involved with foreign capital and foreign direct investment, the greater vulnerability it has to sustain.

Types of Transition by Szelényi

Transition types	Outer-directed capitalism	Top-down directed capitalism	Building capitalism from below (bottom)
Type of Capitalism	Liberal system (New EU-8 members in CEECs)	Patrimonial system; Politically controlled capitalism (Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria)	Hybrid system (China, Vietnam)
Political strategy of transition (conflicts within elites)	Victory of the technocracy over bureaucracy; collaboration with intelligentsia for the hegemony	Bureaucracy preserved its power, using it for the acquisition of private wealth	Coalition of bureaucracy with the new national bourgeoisie; Bureaucracy preserved its political power
Foreign capital	Predominant	Little	Growing portion of TNCs; many small investors
Political system	Multi-party democratic system	Multiparty system with authoritarianism	Mono-party system
Transition crises	Deep, relatively short period (4-5 years)	Shallow at the beginning, but long lasted (10 years <)	No crises

Source: I. Szelényi, ‘Kapitalizmusok szocializmusok után’, *Egyenlítő*, No. 4 (2004), edited by the author

According to Kornai, the transitions of the Central and Eastern European Region are unprecedented. In his 2005⁴¹⁶ essay, when he compares the transition models he came to the

⁴¹⁵ I. Szelényi, ‘Kapitalizmusok szocializmusok után’, *Egyenlítő*, No. 4 (2004), pp. 2-11.

⁴¹⁶ J. Kornai, ‘Közép-Kelet-Európa nagy átalakulása – siker és csalódás’, *Közgazdasági Szemle*, Vol. 52, No. 12 (2005).

conclusion that the CEE region transformations were realised according to the following criteria. The transition itself affected all spheres of the economy and the political institutions.

Transition Models according to Kornai

Characteristics	CEE region	Transformation of the Soviet Union from Socialism into Capitalism	Hungary: Horthy restoration Chile: Pinochet restoration	China: transformation after Mao	West Germany: transformation after WW2	The great historical transformation in Europe: from the Middle Ages into modernity, from pre-capitalism into capitalism
In the main direction of the development of the economic system?	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
In the main direction of the development of the political system?	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Parallel in all spheres?	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Without violence?	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
Without foreign military occupation?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

Source: J. Kornai, 'Közép-Kelet-Európa nagy átalakulása – siker és csalódás', *Közgazdasági Szemle*, Vol. 52, No. 12 (2005), edited by the author

By accepting Kornai's statement, we can agree that the change was so rapid and covered all spheres so it can be rather described as a revolution. Kornai's definition can be also disputable if it is compared with two types of perception which are also well known in this region. One of them relates to Habermas who writes about "repairing revolution" instead of regenerative revolution.⁴¹⁷ However, there is a different phenomenon which is frequently used to characterise this region. In the assistance of the state, the government is determinative because the initiatives usually come from the above. The word is "refolution", which is a composition of two words – reform and revolution blended together. This word refers to Ash and it referred at first to the role of the participants in the process of transition. Ash states that the initiators of the reforms were rather the Communists in late Socialism and the ideas of the "inhabitants", the role of the newly-organised or reorganised civil society was not so decisive. As it is visible, the state, the "upper level" got an enormously great role inherited from previous centuries.⁴¹⁸

The relationship between the state and society, the question of the initiator is a consequence of the historical heritage. Examining the reasons of the economic backwardness or lag is a very complex issue. It cannot be declared that Eastern European backwardness is a mere consequence of the planned economy and state socialism. If this case, it would be enough "to return to normality" by introducing the Western type of market economy by bold and radical reforms. There is some kind of contradiction between Berend and Kornai. When Berend describes the age of socialism as a "detour" in his book published in 1998⁴¹⁹, Kornai prefers to use the symbol of "impasse" to get this model from the traffic signs.⁴²⁰ Both authors mention that socialism cannot be a natural consequence of the events and the features of the economy inherited from the inter-war period. However, there is a slight difference between the two approaches. If we use the word "detour", we accept a type of linear progression and

⁴¹⁷ Nachholende Revolution. It refers to the fact that the reason of these revolutions was the return to the democratic legal state and the norms of the developed capitalist Western European region. According to Habermas's theory, bureaucratic Socialism could not be identified as an alternative version of organised Capitalism. It is rather a backward formation of Capitalism. This is why the revolutions of 1989 can be called as "repairing revolutions". This definition implies that this type of revolution does not have any importance or lesson for the developed Western world.

⁴¹⁸ It also has got a Hungarian version: "reforrádalom" that is also the composition of the two words into one. There is another description, the so-called "velvet revolution" which also refers the fact that the events took place mostly without violence. As Ash remarks, the symbol of the new type of revolution is the "round table" instead of guillotine that represents the possibility of agreement instead of terrorism. (T. G. Ash, *The Magic Lantern. The Revolution of '89 witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*, New York 1990; A. Schmidt, *Törésvonalak és területfejlesztés Lengyelországban; adottságok, szereplők, intézmények, perspektívák*, Doctoral thesis, Pécs 2010.

⁴¹⁹ I. Berend, *Central and Eastern Europe, 1944-1993...*

⁴²⁰ He used this example first time in 2005 at his pubic lecture after receiving Doctor H.C. title at the University of Pécs. The lecture was published in J. Kornai, 'Közép-Kelet-Európa nagy átalakulása...'

this detour is just a moderate bending of the main direction. However the “impasse” is rather a feeling of experience that we did not choose the right way, we have to go back to the starting point and to launch a new progress.

Transition can be characterised by the collapse of state socialism. In most cases, the change of the regime was quite peaceful since the Soviet Union gave up the control of the area and the communist elite lost its self-confidence and hope to be able to solve the towering economic problems. A stormy and spectacular transformation began and characterised the entire period of the 1990s. The economic and political transition of the 1990's across the Central and Eastern Europe was simultaneous with the faster expansion of globalisation in Europe. The change of the regimes brought to life several scenarios in connection with economic transition. From the very beginning, several hundreds of recommendations, studies and critical analyses became worked out by the newly appointed governments, scholars and experts of various international institutions. A broadly accepted set of criteria for a reform programme, the so-called Washington Consensus of 1989, originally applied to less developed, crisis-ridden Latin American countries, was offered as a blueprint for the process of Central and Eastern European economic transformation. The acceptance of the initiative of the Washington consensus concentrated mainly on macroeconomic stabilisation of the post-socialist states; it tried to help reduce the inflation and indebtedness. It rewrote, among others things, the role of the state, the share of the redistribution of resources, the liberalisation of trade, the monetary system and the importance of privatisation, the growing importance of the private sector focusing on the manufacturing industry. New institutions were to be built and the legalisation of the market economy was also essential. It also incorporated the price and trade liberalisation. This prescription was offered for former state socialist countries by the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and the American administration. As Jeffrey Sachs declared, *the economic reforms will set in motion a sustained process of economic restructuring. ... Once market forces... should be a strong pull of resources into the previously neglected service sectors.*⁴²¹ On the other hand, such a great restructuring process was expected from the agricultural and industrial sectors as well. As in the Socialist regime the importance of the energy-intensive heavy industry was unquestionable, with the transformation the labour-intensive and skill-intensive industries became emphasised. Its role

⁴²¹ I. Berend, *The Economic History of Twentieth-Century Europe. Economic Regimes from Laissez-faire to Globalization*, New York 2006, pp. 174-175.

was to increase the competitiveness of this sector in order to make it an important factor on the world market.

However, this tabula rasa process dominated by the Chicago school version of laissez-faire ideology, or market fundamentalism with disregard of social values and the seeking of supremacy of the market values was already in the scenarios of the Reagan's and Thatcher's governments and became the most important principles of the economic transformation in Central and Eastern Europe.⁴²²

During the economic transition, the following principles were kept in mind.

1. The transition to market economy was accompanied with the urgent demand of adaptation to a completely different environment of world economy.
2. There was an inappropriate development trend of economy based on depressing structure of obsolete industry and stagnating service sector.
3. There was a significant deficiency in domestic capital funds with high foreign debts.⁴²³

The Hungarian transformation – its prelude and the reforms that were undertaken

The Hungarian economic and political transformation was based mostly on the principles of the debt trap. However, it is worth to examine the reasons why the debt trap became so typical in the Soviet bloc and why it obtained such a determining influence, reason and consequence in the Hungarian economy. Naturally, it can be explained by several ways. Among others things, it was a consequence of the reaction of the Hungarian political elite after the revolution and war of independence. They tried to avoid any violence after the collapse of the 1956 revolution and war of independence. It was much easier to concentrate on consumption and if there was lack of inner resources, it was the easiest way to ask for a loan from the banks. From the mid 1960s, there was a compromise between the political sphere and the

⁴²² A. Schmidt, 'The Consequence of the EU Enlargement – the New Borders of the European Union' in I. Tarrósy, S. Milford (eds.), *Challenges for the European Union in the Next Decade. A View from the Danube Region*, Pécs 2013, pp. 63-68.

⁴²³ Gál and Rácz write about this in Z. Gál, Sz. Rácz (eds.), *Socio-Economic Analysis of the Carpathian Area*, Pécs 2008, pp. 4-7, *Discussion Papers / Centre for Regional Studies, Hungarian Academy of Sciences*.

Hungarian society. The so-called “Kadarism” was not glorified by the society, as it was rather considered as an acceptable agreement based on the attempt from the state to meet the needs of the nation and to limit the level of the dictatorship in political aspect and in the cultural sphere. If there was anything that could threaten the balance, the danger of losing legitimacy emerged.⁴²⁴

In the 1960s, the world was still far enough from the oil crisis. However, some kind of adjustment was required in Hungary. Thus, it is essential to examine the reasons and the historical background of the peculiarity of the Hungarian economic policy. If we were to begin such an analysis, it would be advisable to deepen oneself in the observation of the facts and data of the historical past, beginning with the facts and consequences of the Hungarian economy after the dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy. It can be stated that the existing economic unity of the two state bodies in the second half of the 19th century was interrupted and Hungary was suffering from the negative consequences of the lost World War I. Instead of an economic cohesion, the new independent Hungarian state found itself cut from its previous industrial centres. A great shock was caused by the area and population loss, but the earlier functioning markets networks and logistic units also disappeared. Until the twilight of the Habsburg Monarchy, the Hungarian economy was functioning as a part of an economic integration and common currency zone.⁴²⁵ Since 1920, as a consequence of the birth of the independent but truncated state, the Hungarian economy transformed from the status of a part of an empire into a small and internationally open economy that brought about a significant dependency on the trade partners both in export and import activities. That was the reason why it was essential for the Hungarian economy to find adequate international trade partners, even if it meant the opening towards the fascist Italian economy or the sympathy towards the German *Grossraumwirtschaft* or later, after 1945, the thrust towards the Comecom. This latter sympathy resulted in an unilateral dependence on the Soviet Union that gradually became less and less tolerable.

Although there are several views concerning the level of the development of the Hungarian economy and the roots and reasons of the relative backwardness, it is generally accepted that as the Hungarian state belonged to the so-called semi-peripheral region, its

⁴²⁴ As Romsics explains it in his essay dealing with the threats of the Hungarian political legitimacy. In: I. Romsics, ‘A Kádár-rendszer legitimitásvesztése az 1980-as években’, *Rubicon*, No. 7-8 (2009).

⁴²⁵ However, there were several attempts to create the Hungarian monetary independence it became realistic only once, when the Hungarian prime minister and minister of finance, Sándor Wekerle hindered the attempt that would have led to the leaving of the common currency and economic zone. (A. Vígvári, ‘Reform és rendszerváltás Magyarországon’, *Rubicon*, No. 2-3 (2008).)

economic and social standards were far from the European core region. It was also generally assumed that if there was anything that could help in the process of modernisation, it definitely had to come from the outside, and thanks to the geographical and cultural position of Hungary, mostly either from Germany or, at least by German intermediation. As it was typical in the entire 20th century, the states of Central and Eastern European region were forced to adapt the Western type of modernisation and – apart from a short period from the early 1950s – no intention was noticeable to receive any results or influence of the Socialist Soviet Union.

There is a lively discussion among historians about the level of convergence towards the more developed Western region. The roots of this debate are based in the question whether the data represent more accurately the level of the productivity of the Hungarian economy versus the core region in past and present. As the evaluation of these data is not the aim of this present essay in which I summarise different statements, it is generally accepted that in the past two hundred years Hungary was only hardly successful in catching up to the Western region. It is still close to the reality that the reasons of this disadvantageous position can be explained with historical, political and social problems as well.

The idea of the viable market economy was a result of a set of slight reforms. It began with the policy of the “new course” announced by the prime minister Imre Nagy in 1953. The revolution and the execution of the leaders of the revolution and war of independence prevented the continuation of the reforms, but from the mid-1960s, a new phase of reforms emerged. The greatest obstacle was the question to what extent the Soviet Union would tolerate the divergence from the Soviet type of socialist economy. It can be proven by data and events that the Hungarian society was among the least tolerable towards the regime and the aims of Socialism. The most spectacular expression of this behaviour was recognisable in October 1956, when within 48 hours the previous political regime became replaced by new and renascent political actors. If it could happen once it could not be guaranteed that it would not happen again. The Kádár regime was the exceptional one that finally chose the reconciliation with the enemy in several aspects.⁴²⁶ One of them was the decision about

⁴²⁶ L. Csaba, ‘Hadigazdaságtól a piaczgazdaságig, 1945-1990’, *Rubicon*, No. 3 (2001).

amnesty in 1962/63, when a great part of the participants of the 1956 October revolution were released. It also meant the official acceptance of the Kádár regime.⁴²⁷

The other attempt was the involvement of the prominent actors of the coalition era with the political elite. There were several experts who did not show any attempt to accept the party membership, but their experience and knowledge seemed to be beneficial. Finally, a slight change in the Socialist economy was decided. The Hungarian New Economic Mechanism⁴²⁸ (NEM) was a chain in the concatenation of the several reforms and patches made by the Hungarian government. In the 1960s, the Hungarian representatives were in negotiations with the IMF⁴²⁹, several representatives of the past coalition parties, or at least experts belonging to the sympathisers of the once-existing parties were invited to different expert committees. These gradual reforms and facilitations did not have great influence on the macroeconomic level, but it made the inhabitants' life enviable, especially comparing with the surrounding socialist states. It also questioned the policy of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party. In order to face the problems and to react for the traumas of the potential economic troubles, a new course emerged in the programme of the state party as well. The initiative was borrowed from the Bible: *... who is not against us is for us.*⁴³⁰

The functioning of the Hungarian NEM can be summarised in the following chapters:

1. The five year plans were rethought and did not appear at the level of the companies.
2. Greater autonomy at company level.
3. Limited influence of instructions from above.
4. Instead of free redistribution of the factors of production, the market became the key actor.
5. Equality of company and cooperative properties, the acknowledgement of the private ownership (at a limited level).

⁴²⁷ The discussion on the 1956 events, the participation of the Soviet troops, the neglecting attitude of the Western powers was stopped. There was no longer debate on this issue at the sessions of General Assembly of the United Nations in New York. It was the end of the Hungarian isolation on the international stage.

⁴²⁸ It can be also written as New Economic Policy (NEP), but it is better to use the abbreviation NEM as NEP can also mean the new economic policy in Russia and in the Soviet Union in the interwar period. (Novaya Ekonomicheskaya Politika).

⁴²⁹ It resulted that in 1967 Hungary nearly became accepted as a member state, however it failed finally.

⁴³⁰ Mark, 9:40.

6. Autonomy of the companies in decision making related to the profit and investment.
7. Central planning system lost its priority, the Central Planning Office lost a great part of its units.
8. Plans and markets are equal.
9. Liberalisation of prices at 25% of consumer goods.
10. Parallel appearance of USD and Rubels in foreign trade.

When the the efforts of the NEM are analysed, it is generally accepted that if there were some reforms that exceeded the frames of the socialist economy initiated in the Soviet Union, Hungary never thought about the breaking away from the Comecom. The decision about the reforms was announced in 1964 at a session of the State Economic Committee and was finalised at the meeting of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party. The introduction of the NEM was planned for the beginning of 1968. However, several unfortunate events preceded and continued the reforms. The six-day war in the Middle East in 1967 and the Prague spring in 1968 forced the Socialist states to approach any changes and reforms carefully. According to the first experience, the reform seemed to be beneficial. The state budget obtained extra income. However, the proportion of the income jumped to 10 or 12 times in the management and the workers of the companies. This resulted an “anti-management” feeling in the representatives of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party itself, so the members of the conservative wing began their attack against the reforms, arguing that the initiative of the reform is the restoration of the ancient middle-class Hungary against the principles of the theory of socialism. When we summarise the effects of the NEM, we could say that the roots of the economic troubles couldn't be solved. The reforms were stopped by 1973, the leaders of the programme were secretly removed from their positions. As it turned out from the example of the fate of the reforms initiated by Khrushchev in the late 1950s and early 1960s, it became generally accepted that the reforms had seemed to be viable without general changes in the entire Hungarian economic policy. However, it would have required political reforms as well, which was hardly tolerable in the country and in the Soviet Union. The fears and arguments against the reforms concentrated on the question of criticising the state party in assistance of losing its power by giving greater autonomy of the companies and cooperatives.

On the slope of indebtedness

The failure of the reforms stopped the entrepreneur spirit in the Hungarian economy and the oil crisis opened a new chapter as well. This had a double effect; the increasing prices of the energy resources and the cheap “oil dollars”. The cheap oil dollars postponed the reforms in most Socialist states. The Hungarian level of consumption was at an exceptional level in comparison with the other states from the bloc. However, by the late 1970s it became obvious that a new chain of reforms were needed to avoid insolvency. The ruble-based accounting system became replaced by the dollar-based version that had painful consequences and more information about the difficulties of the world economy. A new restructuring policy was needed in the Hungarian economy. There was an oversupply in the world market as far as those goods the Hungarian industry could export are concerned. In order to handle the fear of insolvency several scenarios were discussed, as it was generally accepted that the increase of the foreign loans could not be acceptable. Finally, a central decision was announced by the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party in order to handle the economic crisis. However, there were several arguments in favour of the restructuring of the Hungarian economy and to stop the level of loans it took almost five years to work out and to introduce the inevitable reforms. It was not so easy even to convince the old generation of the party elite, but the appearance of the new technocratic experts and their increasing influence caused the conservative socialist wing of the political elite to retreat. In 1984, the introduction of the self-governing system in the management of the (at that time still) state-owned companies was a great step towards the acceptance of the features of the market economies. Approximately two years earlier, as a consequence of the sustainability of the standards of living, the so-called second (invisible) economy became also acceptable. Apart from solving some increasing social and economic troubles, it had a great influence in the birth of the new entrepreneurs. Private ownership gradually entered in the Hungarian economy and, unexpectedly, people began to work hard without any force coming from outside or above. They simply found their own interest and were fighting successfully against the decline of their standard of living.

Troubles in the economy

Apart from the dissolution of the political sphere, the same problems appeared in the Hungarian economy as well. The Hungarian National Bank had to devalue the forint by 8 percent in 1986 against most convertible ones which seemed to be an unprecedented step in the past six years. Based on the recently accepted Act on Bankruptcy, the first liquidation initiated by the state also took place in 1986. The first target firm was a construction company from Veszprém. With the increasing process of the liquidation of the loss-making state-owned companies, the ideology of the socialist Hungary based on full employment devaluated. Thanks to this painful decision, the Hungarian government had to introduce the unemployment benefit in 1989, because approximately 50,000 to 100,000 unemployed appeared in three years.

The government was not successful enough in economic and social reforms. Partly because of the already existing inner contradiction between the technocrats in the several institutions and ministries and partly because of the insufficiently delineated position of Hungary within the socialist world. It was difficult to calculate to what extent Hungary could make its own decisions and when it became inevitable to get the consent of the already weakened Soviet Union, or when it was at least important to inform the “Big Brother”. Despite the economic troubles, the resourceful population gathered significant amounts of illegal income and changed it – partly at the black market – into hard currency. The introduction of the passport valid all over the world made the position of the population even easier. Thanks to the travelling facilities, masses of Hungarians appeared in Yugoslavia and Austria to buy household appliances and electrical equipment.⁴³¹ The most popular items to be bought were the Gorenje freezers, several pictures appeared in the newspapers all over Europe as Hungarian “Trabants” carried freezers on the roof racks. To sum up, the consuming activity of the Hungarian population reached more than 700 million USD spent from the Hungarian foreign exchange reserves.

⁴³¹ The aim of the world passport was to ruin the political borders of Hungary and the Western world to let the people to travel to Western Europe and all over the world without any limitation that existed before 1987. Before that time, Hungary was among the few Socialist countries from where it was possible to travel to Western parts of Europe at least every second or third year. However, it was considered a political restriction not to let the people to travel to the West, but it also had practical meaning, too. It was hardly possible to supply the people intending to travel abroad with the appropriate amount of hard currency. (L. Lengyel, G. Surányi, *Határátkelés. nyv*, Pozsony 2013.)

[PICTURE WILL BE REMOVED]

The rapid growth of the previous decades came to a stop: in 1979 and 1980, Hungary's growth rate declined to 1.6% and 0.0%, respectively. Poland, in 1981 and 1982, experienced a severe decline, -10% and -4.8% respectively. It became obvious that growth policy of the Soviet bloc had to be changed and the economy slowed significantly – from the annual 3.9% increase of the GDP between 1950 and 1973 to 1.2% between 1973 and 1989.⁴³² The economic crisis in the socialist world increased the necessity of transformation. It was strongly connected with the oil crisis which began in 1973. However, the real causes lay much deeper.⁴³³ The reserves of the extensive import-substituting industrialisation dried up around the late 1960s. As the economic policy of the Soviet bloc concentrated on the self-sufficiency within the Comecon member states, the foreign trade with the market economies were neglected until the 1960s. The socialist bloc could not get the benefits of the new technological revolution that emerged between the 1970s and 1980s. The appearance of the PC in 1974 signed and symbolised the turning point. Unfortunately for the members of the Comecon, the symbols of the new technology were seldom used, partly because of political and security purposes – were used mainly in the military industry.⁴³⁴ It also turned out that with the changes in the labour distribution and the developing globalisation, the old leading export branches of the world economy became obsolete. Sales of their products depended on major price reductions. Raw material prices, on the other hand, increased. In case of Hungary, it had a negative effect on the balance of trade between Hungary and the Soviet Union, because for the same amount of raw material, the state had to pay with 3 to 5 times more products. Sometimes raw materials had to be imported from the world market and that also brought the painful recognition of the difference between the competitive world market and

⁴³² Here it is essential to make some remarks. As it is visible from the statistical data that both Berend (idem, *The Economic History...*) and Janos (idem, *Haladás, hanyatlás, hegemonia kelet-Közép-Európában*, Budapest 2004, *Universitas*), it turns out that the most dynamic region was the Soviet bloc from 1945 to 1973. Their annual growth of GDP exceeded the annual growth of the Western European region. The reason of this can be explained with the fact that thanks to the rapid industrialisation, an enormously great part of the national income was spent to investments that resulted a significant economic growth. However, this policy concluded with harmful consequences; the development of heavy industry was in the centre of the investments and the light industry, the supplier of the consumption of the population was neglected such as life circumstances. On the other hand, the resources of the rapid growth concentrated in extensive elements that resulted in a slow process of the depletion of resources.

⁴³³ I. Berend, *The Economic History...*

⁴³⁴ On the other hand, the existence of the so-called COCOM list (**C**oordinating **C**ommittee for Multilateral Export Controls) prevented the Socialist bloc from being acquainted with the tools of the newest technology.

the isolated world of Comecon member states. The roots of this issue are based on the insufficiency of modernisation.

There were two methods of industrialisation in the socialist bloc. One of them concentrated on import-substituting that helped in the modernisation of the semi-peripheral region. This method was in practice mostly from the late 1940s. In case of Hungary (and the other Soviet bloc member states), this resulted in the dramatical decline in the standards of living of the population as the greater part of the investments concentrated on heavy industry and among others than the mining sector. This method brought a great increase of energy and mineral extraction, but had a limited concentration on efficiency and cost-savings.

The countries of import-substituting industrialisation could not follow the technological revolution and experienced devastating trade deficits. The lack of adjustment in building new modern export sectors based on the achievements of the technological revolution exacerbated the crisis. According to Berend's vision⁴³⁵ of the Schumpeterian structural crisis (the decline of the old and the rise of the new leading sectors as a consequence of technological revolution, which generated a 1-2 decade stagnation or slow growth) of the 1970s-1980s hit the socialist countries especially hard; they were unable to introduce competitive new technology and export sectors.

The necessity of restructuring the economies was obvious. In order to get new positions in the Western markets and to obtain hard currency for selling the competitive and exportable goods several reforms were needed. Until the mid 1970s, trade with free market countries was marginal. However, the socialist countries were forced to change their international economic environment and to search for new potential trade partners. The effectiveness of opening the isolated markets was based upon the political openness of the given Socialist state and the necessity of importing several goods that were available on the world market. With reference to this, Hungary was among the more open states as the Hungarian export and import began to orientate to the West already in the late 1960s. That was the reason why the Hungarian trades had to realise that the quality of goods the Hungarian enterprises produced did not meet the quality requirements of the world market.⁴³⁶ Hungary was not alone in this reaction. An unavoidable slowing down of production increased shortage and pushed countries onto the open, free trade world markets. Hungary,

⁴³⁵ I. Berend, *The Economic History...*

⁴³⁶ J. Honvári, 'Az új gazdasági mechanizmus', *Rubicon*, No. 2-3 (2008), pp. 44-58.

Poland, Romania and Yugoslavia were among the countries which developed important trade relations with free market countries and reduced the trade with the Soviet-led Comecom countries to 50-60%. In order to increase the hard currency income, the Socialist states had to reorganise their economies. From the Hungarian point of view this brought the export-orientated version of production. There were several elements of the transformation that had to be worked out. Adjusting to world market prices and liberalising imports created competition for the heretofore protected and isolated Central and Eastern European economies, and this was also a prerequisite for market adjustments. On the other hand, it caused a decline in output.

The opening of the economies brought the fear of inflation, and the ever-increasing trade deficit. It was functioning as a double-edged sword. The Kádár regime in Hungary and the acceptance, or at least tolerance of socialism was based on a moderate level of the standards of living. It was called socialist market economy, although, in fact, it obtained some elements of the market economy. However, it was still isolated and the requirements towards the Comecom membership obstructed the acceptance of the principles of the market economy. The system of rationing was over, most of the goods were available in shops.⁴³⁷ This was the basis of the calm and boring everyday life of the Hungarian population. Consumption was guaranteed at a moderate level, the possibility of extra work was also acceptable especially from the early 1980s, when the germs of the private sector were already widespread. People had the right to organise small enterprises, so-called communities of works and they could earn extra money.

This was the best in the Kádár regime⁴³⁸

Kádár regime-related memories of the Hungarian population (in percentage of the answers)

	Safe workplace, no unemployment	35
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⁴³⁷ Of course, this can be examined in two ways. If we compare the level of consumption in Hungary with the Western European standards, we can see how deep the Hungarian level was. But on the other hand, if the level of Hungarian consumption was compared with other Socialist states which still had the system of rationing, like e.g. Poland in case of meat or the Soviet Union where a lot of goods from sugar to washing powder could be bought only in limited amounts, Hungary found itself in a distinguished position. This is the reason why the Hungarian system was called “fridge socialism” together with “goulash communism”.

⁴³⁸ The survey was made in 2007 and the results were published in September, 2007.

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.	Material safety, better life, sufficient salary	25
.	Predictability, safety, planability	11
.	Facility in gaining a flat, a house	5
.	"I was young"	5
.	The possibility of travelling for holidays	4
.	Social security, equality of dignity	3
.	Everything was good in the Kádár regime	3
.	No inflation, strong forint (Hungarian currency)	2
.	Cohesive society ⁴³⁹	2
.	The communist youth organisations, the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party	2
.	Good future, safety in future	2

⁴³⁹ This is a very interesting comment as according to Körössényi the Hungarian society was among the most individualist ones at that time with a limited participation in any circles, movements, or other elements of the civil society. Körössényi explains this individualism by the relative high level of consumption. People were less vulnerable to the surrounding environment, social ties were less important (A. Körössényi, 2004)[please add this book to bibliography]

	Nothing good	2
	Good public safety	1
	No answer	23

Source: I. Romsics, *Magyarország története a XX. században*, Budapest 2001, nyvek, p. 520.

The faith towards the state was the basis of the socialist Hungary. It was assumed that the individual didn't have the possibility (even didn't have the reason) to involve himself or herself in decisions belonging to the political sphere. It was commonly accepted that the individual didn't have the possibility to do anything against decisions harmful for the inhabitants, furthermore, the paternalistic political system did everything to convince them that the state would make every effort to let the citizens to meet their needs and the only thing that was expected from them was not to argue against them.⁴⁴⁰ This behaviour towards the state survived and transformed at a moderate way. Because of the change of the regime, the convulsive behaviour of the inhabitants previously shown towards the policemen, tollers, or frontier-guards almost disappeared, but on the other hand the fear of economic vulnerability increased. It is recognisable in the conviction that every entrepreneur was swindler and the price of their success was paid by the losing average inhabitant. These two decades of the political and economic transformation still couldn't erase this type of conviction and the consequences of the economic crisis of 2008, the decline in the living conditions of a great part of the population amplified this feeling.

Corrections in the socialist model – the twilight of socialism

Credits and debts were visible everywhere in the socialist world. As there were several attempts to reorganise the economy, it was obvious that because of several reasons the

⁴⁴⁰ This is the opinion belonging to Elemér Hankiss and László Bruszt, the famous Hungarian sociologists quoted in *Figyelő*, No39 (2007).

socialist economy could be functioning only with a limited efficiency. It was even a crucial question to what extent the intervention to the economy without political consequences was feasible. As it was one of the pillars of the Kádár regime and the faith towards the socialist regime tolerated no dramatic changes in living condition. As far as the consequences of the failure (or at least half-success) of the New Economic Mechanism are concerned, it was essential to look for alternative solutions in order to avoid the internal political conflicts and to calm the critics coming from either the Hungarian conservative communist politicians or the worrying "friendly" Czechoslovakian, East German and Soviet politicians.

Because Comecom member countries followed the traditional fast-growth policy, they were faced with an ever-increasing trade deficit. The financial market was flooded with cheap "oil dollars", as a great portion of the tremendous extra income of the oil-exporting countries was exported. As it was easy to borrow, the governments of the region did not hesitate to bridge the deficit gap with loans. Between 1970 and 1990, the net amount of debts in the region increased from \$6 billion to \$110 billion. Hungary's \$20 billion debt was two times greater than the value of the country's export, but Poland's \$42 debt was five times higher than its export income. Debt servicing consumed up to 75% of the hard currency income, but in the case of Hungary, by the late 1980s it reached almost 100% that made the balance between foreign and internal trade extremely difficult. New credits were needed to repay the old ones and apart from this, only a limited part of the total income was devoted to investments. In Hungary, from the almost 20 million USD debt only a quarter of its had been invested, but in the case of other states of the socialist region even worse statistical data could be observed.

Besides the economic slowdown, quite a few Central and Eastern European countries which had fixed prices under state Socialism started to lose control over inflation. Between 1989 and 1992, GDP and output across the region declined 25-30% and 30-40%, respectively. The unemployment rate jumped from zero to 15-20% in the CEE region. The economic crisis generated a political crisis and the regimes lost their temporary legitimacy. This led to a peaceful collapse of the state socialism in 1989-91.⁴⁴¹

The process of debtness in and the correlation of annual growth in Hungary

⁴⁴¹ I. Berend, *The Economic History...*

Year	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Annual growth of GNP	1.5	0.1	2.9	2.8	0.7	2.7	- 0.3	1.5	3.4	0.1
Share of convertible debt of the total	94.0	92.3	91.5	90.5	91.0	92.4	93.8	95.4	96.5	97.8
Gross debt in million USD	8,300	9,090	8,699	10,216	10,745	10,983	13,955	16,914	19,592	19,328
Share of the total debt in the annual export in %	159	159	139	151	163	182	198	234	242	247

Source: A. Vigvári, 'Reform és rendszerváltás Magyarországon', *Rubicon*, No. 2-3 (2008).

Although according to the socialist methods, the Hungarian politicians tried to hide the actual situation of the balance of the state budget, in the November of 1989 the actual prime minister, Miklós Németh had to confess that the experts of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party had tried to dissemble the almost 3 billion dollar debt. The reason of this attempt was easy to be understood; they were afraid of the lenders and of the reaction of their inhabitants. After this incident, the IMF revoked the agreement, and a year later, in 1990, some months before the first democratic elections, a new contract had to be accepted with the retiring government. As the criteria of the new contract were much stricter, the margins of the new coalition government were much more limited.

As a result of the inevitable decisions, a two-tier banking system was also introduced in 1987 that was followed by a series of reforms and acts that could lay the economic ground for the transformation.

The state found itself in debt trap by the beginning of the 1980s. As it was already mentioned, the greatest problem was the way how the “oil dollars” were used in practice. As it was essential to keep the standards of living and to avoid any kind of demonstration or uprising a relatively great part (around 75%) was transferred to consumption. On the other hand, the reasons of the unbalanced economy and the consequences of the collapsed 1956 revolution and war of independence also had to take into account.⁴⁴² The Hungarian attitude towards the repayment of loans was also remarkable. In 1989, Hungary decided to pay back all the loans. It was unanimously supported by the newly organised parties, including the reformed Socialist Party itself as well. There was the hope that there was a potential of growth for the Hungarian economy.⁴⁴³ The reasons of this relatively good outcome can be examined as a consequence of the openness of the Hungarian economy towards the foreign direct investments.

The traumatic news about the level of the Hungarian economic crisis resulted with shock among the members of the parliament and the public opinion. Until the official declaration, the statistical data were state secrets. Even the experts of the National Bank or the Ministry of Finance had limited information about the real amounts. In the early 1980s, a quiet struggle took part causing a cleavage between the deputy prime minister (József Marjai) and the president of the Hungarian National Bank (Fekete János).⁴⁴⁴ Seeing the risk of insolvency, the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party informed the Soviet Union about the hopeless financial situation and asked for a loan already in 1978. The Soviet Union, however, refused to pay 1 billion dollars, as they were interested in the arms race that required a great amount of financial resources. Apart from this, the Soviet Union had to concentrate both on the arms race and the occupation of Afghanistan. Hungary had to look for financial aid in the world financial market. After the fiasco in the late 1960s, the Hungarian negotiation was successful and in 1982 Hungary joined the IMF.⁴⁴⁵ After Hungary

⁴⁴² As Lengyel and Surányi commented in their book dealing with the way to the Hungarian transition, the reasons of the debt trap can be summarised in the following terms: the lost revolution and war of independence with the economic consequences, as most of the events took place in Budapest, the administrative and economic centre of Hungary, plus the loss of the labour force. They were either in prison because of their participation in the events, or the younger and skilled workers simply chose the emigration to the West causing enormous damage to the labour force. The other reason of this economic situation can be explained with the relatively high standards of living compared to the neighbouring socialist countries. In: L. Lengyel, G. Surányi, *Határátkelés...*, pp. 116-117.

⁴⁴³ According to Lengyel and Surányi, after a slight decline in the mid-1990s, out of the 20 billion dollar debt by the millennium only approximately 2 billion remained.

⁴⁴⁴ In: L. Csaba, ‘Hadigazdaságtól a piacgazdaságig...’, pp. 24-29.

⁴⁴⁵ As a matter of fact, the Hungarian timing was partly successful as the application arrived a day before the state of emergency (martial law) was declared in Poland.

became the member of the IMF in 1982, 475 million, and another 72 million and in 1984 another 425 million USD were transferred to the state. Despite the help coming from the international sources, the balance of current accounts was still instable. From 1988 the annual basis of the balance on current accounts reached 8-9% of the Hungarian GDP that was difficult to keep in control. A new decision about the introduction of the passport that was valid all over the world increased the difficulties in monetary policy. The share of the private import grew to an uncontrolled level and the monthly amount of the outflow reached 150 million dollars. The foreign exchange reserves of the Hungarian National Bank decreased to a critical level. This condition required a quick and strict decision that was made in the summer of 1989. First of all, the amount of the hard currency to one person was limited to 50 dollars and new negotiations were begun in the background about new financial aid coming from several sources. Fortunately, according to Lengyel and Surányi⁴⁴⁶ the 95% of the loans belonged to the long-term ones that gave a limited margin to the Hungarian state and, on the other hand, the Hungarian practice based on the controlled exchange policy. However, the difficulties with the foreign exchange reserves persisted. From the spring of 1990 to the summer of 1991 summer, its amount multiplied, but the fear of inflation and the troubles of economy connected with the transformation didn't disappear at once.⁴⁴⁷

Political contexts led to different outcomes across transition countries. Although the principles of Washington Consensus were at least discussed in transition countries, the acceptance of the recommendations of WC were not accepted everywhere. In Hungary, there was a high level of international debt but also a strong community of economists with international standing and good contacts with economic thinkers from outside the old Soviet bloc. They had the confidence to question policy ideas from outside.⁴⁴⁸ There were also pragmatic reasons for ignoring the WC strategy, as reform in Hungary had already taken the country long way from traditional central planning.⁴⁴⁹ A single package, delivered as a shock,

⁴⁴⁶ L. Lengyel, G. Surányi, *Határátkelés...*

⁴⁴⁷ In 1990, the lack of hard currency reached a critical level. The total amount of hard currency was equal with the value of one month's import and a year later it reached the 5 month level. The former minister of finance, László Békesi confessed in an interview in 2010 that the foreign exchanges level was at such a critical level that the price of the exported goods that was paid by dollars or any kind of hard currency was simply taken to the briefcase into the Ministry of Commerce and taken to the Hungarian National Bank and this situation lasted for several months. In: *Figyelő*, No. 51-52 (2009).

⁴⁴⁸ M. Myant, J. Drahokoupil, *Transition Economies. Political Economy in Russia, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia*, Hoboken 2011, pp. 99-100.

⁴⁴⁹ With the introduction of the New Economic Programme valid from 1968 January, Hungary formally left the central planning system leaving more freedom for the (state-owned) enterprises. The reforms were stopped at a moment because of several reasons, so the second wave was not functioning. In practice, the old strategy of

was therefore irrelevant in economic terms. It was a political demonstration of a change of direction. It was also considered a political danger in the government circles to undertake a rapid transition that would leave part of the population “abandoned along the way”. When the minister of finance was asked why Hungary would want to proceed more slowly than Poland, he responded: *We cannot risk the social tensions that would put everything in question.*⁴⁵⁰

The reforms that were accepted and introduced between 1985 and 1988 led Hungary from the socialist economy to a special type of “socialist market economy”. As Berend and Lengyel László argue⁴⁵¹, the reforms accepted in socialist Hungary were the next steps towards the economic transformation nevertheless without any attempt to make any modification in the political structure.

1. One of the most important changes appeared in the life of the state-owned companies as decentralisation appeared at the management level. The responsibility was divided between newly-elected managers and the state having the state party and the organs of the central governments had less opportunity to interfere. This new type of management with the symbolic right of the state as the owner to intervene led gradually to the spontaneous privatisation.

2. The price and wage system was also modified as the 90% of the goods belonged to the free price system. That had double consequences: the goods didn't disappear from the shops and there was no necessity to introduce any kind of shock therapy to handle the problem caused by the so-called monetary overhang. That made the economic transition less expensive as compared with the Russian or Polish versions.

Hungary's position versus Western Europe according to Hungarian people's opinion in percentage

socialist economy didn't return. As it is generally accepted, the real importance of the reforms is based on the fact that the spirit of reforms survived and had an enormous importance in the following years.

⁴⁵⁰ M. Myant, J. Drahokoupil, *Transition Economies...* The Hungarian government's attitude after the political change simply followed the principles of the attitude of the old regime. The success and popularity of the Kádár regime was based on the slow, and calm everyday life without greater shocks in order to avoid any kind of mass demonstrations. As it turned out from Kádár's last speech in 1988 in front of the representatives of the Central Committee of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party (quoted by Góralczyk) he still couldn't break with the question of the collapse of the 1956 revolution and war of independence and his personal responsibility in the execution of the popular prime minister of the revolution, Imre Nagy. Apart from his role, the fear of the repeating of the revolution was present in his political decisions as well. B. Góralczyk, *Magyar törésvonalak*, Budapest 2002, *Universitas*, pp. 49-52.

⁴⁵¹ I. Berend, *Törésvonalak*, 2009[please add to bibliography Berend T. I.: *Central and Eastern Europe, 1944-1993. Detour from the Periphery to the Periphery*, and L. Csaba, 'Hadigazdaságtól a piacgazdaságig...'

(It was better in Hungary then in Western Europe)

		1981	1986	1988
.	Right to work	98	87	42
.	Protection of the workers' interest	96	93	80
.	Level of the medical health care	90	66	47
.	The well-balanced life of families	86	73	36
.	The resale value of the currency	66	41	6
.	Possibility to get/ buy a flat	63	39	16
.	Material elements of well-being	46	29	10
.	Large selection of goods	44	34	18
.	Well-dressed people	42	33	28
0.	Possibilities of travelling abroad	29	27	33
1.	Amount of free time	58	46	27
	Equal opportunities	78	69	38

2.				
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Source: I. Romsics, *Magyarország története a XX. században*, Budapest 2001 , p. 521, *Osiris nyvek*.

Final remarks

The transition, however, had another aspect. The major part of the new economy was necessarily built on foreign investment-based or restructured economic organisations. The expansion of multinational firms yielding their profits from their absolute price advantages (cheap products) in the first period of transition served as a basis for this new economy.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 opened a new historical chapter for Eastern Europe. But it also marked a turning point in neo-liberal globalisation and European construction. The economic crisis in the early 2000's brought to the surface a lot of questions originated in the process of ambiguous transformation. If we combine these elements to the generally accepted components of the successful transformation of backward or semi-peripheral regions in case of the so-called *small open economies*⁴⁵² the following elements can guarantee the success:

a) According to the economists, the level of the openness of the given economy is essential for the future. It can help to substitute the insufficient internal market. It is generally accepted that the speed and level of development of a given economy is based and linked with the size of the internal market. In this regard, Hungary's internal market belonged to the small size ones that could cause an impedimental effect.

b) The level of the R&D and its support can also determine the effectiveness of the development of the economies. They can substitute the geographical position as well. If a state affords to support the places of scientific research, whether they are universities or research centres, it can also determine the speed of catching up.

c) Stability of the favourable business environment can also be an important factor of the increase. It has to be in accordance with the supporting legal and institutional

⁴⁵² As Romsics writes about it in: idem, 'Félperifériától a félperifériáig, a magyar gazdaság 20. századi teljesítménye', *Rubicon*, No. 2-3 (2008), pp. 4-18.

background. Apart from those, these are the factors that can also move forward the economic development: reliability, predictability and equality in the competition. If there are no big cultural, language problems and social differences, they can also help.

To conclude our investigation, it is reasonable to think over the following questions: Can we talk about a successful economic transition in Hungary compared with the surrounding states of the post-Soviet bloc? Was it successful from the perspective of the convergence towards the more developed West? How can we evaluate the transition, can we speak about the return to the original path or did Hungary have to make a return from a detour, or impasse? From these factors the Hungarian economy and society were not a good example. Looking at the events of the past decades, it is obvious that social disparities and ethnic conflicts hampered the uninterrupted economic growth. The devastation caused by the world wars, the territorial loss after the First World War and the communist diversion also hurt the Hungarian economy as well as the society. The ethnic and religious purges caused the emigration of the intelligentsia, in particular the Jewish scientists, artists left Hungary and settled down abroad. The persecution of the Jews in the interwar Hungary also belonged to the painful moments of the Hungarian history. The consequences, the lost war and the inclusion to the Soviet bloc and the changes forced outside and initiated by the Soviet Union were among the consequences of the economic and social troubles.

The destiny of Hungarian economy and political system was decided in Yalta and Potsdam at the end of the World War II for subsequent decades. The 1956 revolution and war of independence failed and lasted for a fortnight without great influence in economy. The NEM, however, opened a new perspective for catching up with the West. The previously mentioned facts explain the reason why it was only a partly successful attempt. The year 1989, however, brought a new chance. The scenarios were different, however the task to be solved was almost the same. The old-fashioned party members and the reformist technocrats were forced to collaborate in the reconstruction of the Hungarian economy struggling with several new troubles. Sometimes the chosen methods were not the most successful, as Samary points out. She accuses the Hungarian communist leaders that they were the only ones to decide to respond to the crisis of external debt by selling the country's best enterprises to foreign capital. According to her opinion, this made Hungary in the first year of transition the principal host country for foreign direct investment, but the Hungarians were among the first

who – following on the new European relations established by Gorbachev, to help bring down the Berlin Wall.⁴⁵³



⁴⁵³ C. Samary, East Europe...

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